This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07572718 4

NCW
FAUX

THE FAUX PAS.

A NOVEL.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

THE

FAUX PAS,

OR

FATAL ATTACHMENT.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By C. L.

" Let the buſy, or the wiſe,
" View him with contemptuous eyes;
" Love is native to the heart,
" Guide its wiſhes as you will;
" Without love you'll find it ſtill,
" Void in one eſſential part."

AKENSIDE.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
AT THE
Minerva-Preſs,
BY WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL STREET.
1800.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
18339B
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1939 L

THE FAUX PAS.

LETTER I.

HORTON TO MATILDA.

Tueſday, half-paſt One in the Morning.

IT is now paſt midnight, and I have not yet been able to obtain that repoſe my haraſſed ſpirits require.—Before my cruel deſtiny places me at an inſupportable diſtance, I will

39 X 688

endeavour to alleviate the agitation of my mind by communicating the ſubject of my uneaſineſs to you.—It is only in the ſeparation of lovers that Fortune may be juſtly accuſed of ſeverity; compared with that, every other evil appears powerleſs.—If, hitherto, I have not been able to endure paſſing a ſingle day without your endearing ſociety, how ſhall I ſupport an abſence of ſeveral months, and at the diſtance of a hundred miles?—The idea occaſions an acceſſion of anguiſh.—Surely no heart ever acknowledged love like mine—it is not only by the moſt powerful inclination, and the tender ties of a moſt ardent affection that I am attached to you; but

but by ſome ſecret influence which language is inadequate to expreſs:—it is your love which enables me to exiſt.—Oh Matilda! cheriſh the idea; and if it be ever poſſible that you ſhould think of me with indifference, conclude that my life is near its cloſe!

While you are reading this letter, I ſhall be proceeding on my journey; by imperceptible gradations my body will be removed from you, but my ſoul will be ever with you—it will hover around you, like the inviſible genius which protects the actions of the juſt; and each mile I paſs, will only add a link to that chain which attaches me to you for ever.

Let not your ſpirits be too much depreſſed by our ſeparation; conſider it as the ſureſt means of uniting us one day for ever, and may that thought enliven the melancholy interval of our abſence!—Adieu! do not fail to write to me on my arrival at L——. Heaven protect and preſerve you!

LETTER

LETTER II.

MORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

L——, Oct. 28.

BY taking the earlieſt opportunity to inform you of my arrival at L——, I yield to the impulſe of friendſhip. My journey was as agreeable as I could expect; a diligence, you know, offers but little to amuſe, or excite curioſity. I had only one fellow-traveller; he,

you will convey the enclosed letter agreeably to its address. I trust to the generous interest you feel in every thing which relates to me, for an excuse for the uneasiness I know you will experience on perusing this letter. —Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER III.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 6.

YOU are right, my friend—that ſtupor which ſuſpends the action of my ſenſes, may be prejudicial to me—I will endeavour to ſhake it off;—yet, when I contemplate my preſent proſpects, have I not cauſe to be uneaſy?—I was never calculated to ſhine in

the world; my character, formed for friendſhip, has influenced me to paſs my life far from the buſy haunts of men; and, in the boſom of philoſophy, I poſſeſs that exquiſite perception and exceſs of ſenſibility, which render the lighteſt misfortune extremely painful. How often have I been affected, even to anguiſh, by objects which others have encountered without the leaſt emotion!—How often have I been expoſed to the deriſion of cold unfeeling minds!—How often have I curſed my weakneſs, and incapability of ſubduing it!—Neceſſity will now actually oblige me to it—the profeſſion I am about to adopt demands this

this ſacrifice, and I ſhall be happy if I can effect it.

I have ſeen Mr. Mackworth, the Manager of the Theatre; he received me very politely, and preſented me to his wife, who is very handſome and agreeable; they invited me to dinner, and their manners are extremely poliſhed. During this time I forgot my ſorrows, and my mind was conſiderably calmer. They compelled me to promiſe I would frequently viſit them. In the company of ſuch a woman I may, in ſome degree, detach my thoughts from myſelf, and, from the blandiſhments of agreeable converſation, recover my tranquillity.

I ſent my letter of recommendation to Mr. Winterton; he is a very rich merchant: he received me very civilly, and politely invited me to viſit him. I underſtand he ranks as the firſt commercial man here; he amaſſed, during the laſt war, an immenſe fortune—it is ſaid one hundred and fifty thouſand pounds. His manners have much of that formality which diſtinguiſhes mercantile people, but his well-known benevolence has acquired him the reſpect and eſteem of every one. I hear he has a large family, conſiſting chiefly of daughters, who are all reckoned very handſome; I ſuppoſe, in a few days, I ſhall have an opportunity of ſeeing them.

Sincerely

Sincerely do I thank you for conveying the letter I incloſed to you. I wait for an anſwer with extreme impatience.—Oh my friend! would to God I could repreſs the ardency and impetuoſity of my feelings on every ſubject which intereſts my heart!—Reaſon will not effect it—time at leaſt is too weak for the conteſt—probably the cold hand of Time may correct them; but before that period my heart will ceaſe to palpitate.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 13.

WHAT! are you ſurpriſed at the force of my attachment to Matilda?—Certainly you cannot know the human heart, if you are ignorant that our moſt tender affections are thoſe which ſway us with the greateſt power. You have often, in the warmth of generous

generous friendſhip, imputed to me a ſtrength and firmneſs above my age; but ſuch is the dominion of my paſſions, that I certainly cannot pretend to the qualities which you ſay I poſſeſs. Love reigns deſpotic in my heart, and each of its ſenſations leaves a trace of my ſlavery. Probably love is only a weakneſs—in fact I think it ſo; but it is a weakneſs which has often ſubdued the vaunted ſtrength of reaſon.

You ſay you are much ſurpriſed at the delicacy which influences me to withhold, even from friendſhip, an account of the circumſtances which produced ſuch a violent paſſion. That

delicacy, my deareſt friend, is in conſequence of ſeveral events, which I could not communicate without feeling that I was abſolutely defective of it: I can now, however, divulge them without incurring that imputation; for Matilda's father has, by his conduct, proved himſelf to be diveſted of every principle of gratitude and honour.

My attachment to Matilda commenced by one of thoſe ordinary occurrences which very frequently determine the moſt important events of life. Perhaps, my friend, it would have been more happy for me if that moment had terminated my exiſtence!—The inſtant I rendered an

eſſential

eſſential ſervice to Matilda, I at the ſame time loſt both my tranquillity and my heart.

I met her one day in the ſtreet, much embarraſſed and perplexed by the libertine expreſſions of one of thoſe beings who diſgrace the name of man. Her extraordinary beauty has, you know, frequently attracted general admiration; it is not therefore ſurpriſing that ſhe ſhould have obtained the rude notice of one of thoſe men, whoſe whole time is occupied with women and themſelves. She was alone—a circumſtance which this inſolent fellow took advantage of; he accoſted her with that familiar air which

the

the ſociety of libertines imparts; I ſaw her embarraſſment, and determined to deliver her from ſuch a diſagreeable ſituation. The bluſh of modeſt indignation ſuffuſed her cheeks, and animated every feature of her face; but her groſs perſecutor was ſo callous to the ſentiments of virtue, that he conſidered the effects of reſentment as the artificial deſigns of coquetry. I politely offered her my aſſiſtance, which ſhe accepted; and I ſoon delivered her from the inſolence of one of thoſe contemptible creatures who, in general, are as mean and cowardly as they are inſenſible to the dictates of honour.

I con-

I conducted her home, and reſpectfully retired, after having received her thanks for my kind interference.

For the remainder of the day my mind was totally occupied by the charms of the beautiful ſtranger. I cannot convey to you an idea of the impreſſion ſhe made on me. I endeavoured ineffectually to ſatisfy my curioſity by enquiring about her in the neighbourhood; the family had lived there but a ſhort time, and in circumſtances too low (they lived on a ſecond floor) to attract attention. This information ſeemed to deſtroy all the hopes of happineſs I had formed by an union with her; and I had nearly relinquiſhed

relinquiſhed the expectation of ever ſeeing her again, when chance one day introduced me to her father.

He entreated me to accompany him to his lodgings, to which I readily acceded; he preſented me to his wife, and his daughter ſoon after appearing, excited my ſurpriſe and joy by offering to my view the charming object which, a few days before, inſpired me with ſo much admiration and reſpect. She was equally aſtoniſhed at ſeeing me, but her emotion ſeemed to ariſe from ſome agreeable ſenſation.

After ſtaying a little time, I aroſe to take my leave, when they invited me, in

in a moſt preſſing manner, to repeat my viſit, which I accepted with unfeigned ſincerity.

Two or three days afterwards, the impetuoſity of my wiſhes overpowering the trivial forms of politeneſs, I called on them in the evening. I found her extremely diſtreſſed: her father, who I had been informed was in very embarraſſed circumſtances, had been that morning unfeelingly torn form the arms of his wife and daughter, and hurried to priſon for a debt.

I was ſenſibly affected by this diſaſter, but my heart was deeply wounded by

by Matilda's forlorn ſituation; her fears for her unhappy father had nearly deprived her of her ſenſes. Her mother ſeemed to receive with pleaſure a viſit from one who might conſole and aſſiſt her; I offered my ſervices, and they were inſtantly accepted.

At this inſtant Matilda fainted, and would have fallen to the ground had I not caught her in my arms; and judge of my ſenſations while I held her during the time her mother, by proper applications, was endeavouring to reſtore her. The diſorder of her dreſs, the troubled air of her countenance, kindled in my boſom a heat and tumult, the ſure indications of a violent paſſion.

Our

Our efforts ſucceeded in recovering her; and when ſhe perceived her ſituation, ſhe ſeemed ſurpriſed and afflicted. By an involuntary impulſe I preſſed her to my boſom.—Oh my friend! how exquiſite were my ſenſations when I found ſhe not only permitted my embrace, but ſeemed to partake of the lively emotion which agitated my heart!—At that moment I was nearly ſenſeleſs with delight!

I ſupplicated her to be calm, aſſured her I would ſee her father in the morning, and promiſed that a ſimilar misfortune ſhould never ſeparate them again.

The

The ſum for which he was detained, was not conſiderable, and which I could eaſily ſpare; and therefore reſolved to relieve Matilda from the cruelty of ſuſpenſe. Early on the following morning, I entered the dreary manſion in which her father was confined; and after having obtained his liberty, I conducted him to his lodgings, and reſtored him to the arms of his anxious family.

I was this day in ecſtacy with the delightful ſenſations of an enchanting paſſion. Matilda's gratitude was profuſe, and energetically expreſſed; and when gratitude enters the female heart, love hovers round it.

The

The events which ſucceeded theſe, you are well acquainted with.—Farewel!

LETTER V.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 18.

TO whom but you can I have recourſe to for conſolation?—To whom can I unboſom myſelf without the fear of blame or contempt, if not to a ſenſible and generous friend, who knows my foibles, pities them, and encourages me?

I fear

I fear that the profeſſion I am entering upon will occaſion me much pain and anxiety; but why ſhould it do ſo?—No profeſſion can be diſhonourable in itſelf, unleſs it is connected with meanneſs or vice. In fact, the prejudices of the world are againſt it; but its prejudices are generally unjuſt and miſplaced. Confident of my own honour, I cannot fly from the ſituation in which it has pleaſed Almighty Providence to place me; and whether it ſhould eventually prove good or bad, I will adopt it.

In conſequence of an invitation, I went yeſterday to dine with Mr. Winterton. On being introduced into

the dining-parlour, I found the family aſſembled to the number of ſix perſons. Mrs. Winterton, being diſtantly related to ſome perſons of rank, is extremely haughty—ſhe appears to be about fifty; the ſon, the eldeſt of the children, is about twenty-ſix; the eldeſt daughter twenty-four, and the youngeſt thirteen. I afterwards learned there was another ſon, who is an Officer in the Army.

On being ſeated, after the cuſtomary ceremonies, I had the opportunity of examining them more diſtinctly. All the girls are handſome, and many would be puzzled which to give the preference to; with me it was ſoon determined

determined—Julia, the third daughter, about twenty years of age, has a tender languor in her eyes that beſpeaks a heart of exquiſite ſenſibility. At firſt view I was much pleaſed with her; although we are frequently deceived on ſuch occaſions, we ſeldom reſiſt the diſpoſition we feel to a favourable preposſeſſion; a firſt impreſſion is difficultly defaced, and I think the judgment often confirms theſe firſt impulſions of ſentiment.

Soon after I was ſeated, an elderly and a young gentleman were introduced, the latter of whom ſeemed to entertain a very high opinion of his own merit and perſon.

When dinner was announced, I confeſs I wiſhed I might be ſeated near the charming Julia. On entering the dining-parlour, I perceived the chair next to her was vacant; I immediately poſſeſſed myſelf of the ſeat, and I thought ſhe ſeemed pleaſed that I occupied it.

At dinner, the lady of the houſe, an exact obſerver of the manners of good company and of politeneſs, was to me, as a ſtranger, extremely attentive. Mr. Winterton was gay and eaſy; the eldeſt daughter, who was on my right hand, aſſiſted her father in doing the honours of the table, which were performed with a conſiderable

derable degree of elegance; and Julia, who was on my left, was aſſiduous without oſtentation, and attentive without affectation.

The converſation was on general topics, news, politics, and commerce, but I ſeldom joined; my diſcourſe, though limited and broken, was principally addreſſed to Julia, who was ſenſible of my attention, and received it with apparent gratification.

When the cloth was removed, the converſation turned on the laſt war: they ſpoke of our fleets and armies in the Weſt Indies; ſome Commanders were blamed, and ſome were applauded.

One Officer, who is entitled to my ſincereſt veneration and eſteem, was mentioned with great contempt;—I told Mr. Winterton he was wrong informed—that the Officer who had been named, merited for his eminent ſervices not only the reſpect of the nation, but of every good and generous individual. I then mentioned ſeveral circumſtances which I had witneſſed, for I ſerved ſome time under him, that not only evinced him an Officer of merit, but, what is more acceptable in the eye of Heaven, a man of great humanity. I was animated, and ſpoke with ſome warmth; the company attended to me in ſilence, and ſeemed convinced.

Mr.

Mr. Winterton made an excellent defence, and, by ſucceſſive queſtions, led me into a detail of all the operations I had been witneſs to in the weſtern hemiſphere. Every one appeared ſatisfied with my narrative, and ſenſibly affected by ſome of the circumſtances; they liſtened to me with the moſt profound attention. I ſaw the charming Julia, who had withdrawn a little from the table, had her beautiful eyes fixed upon me;—I felt a ſpecies of confuſion which I ſoon overcame when I reflected on the noble cauſe I was defending; but my triumph was but of ſhort duration.

I was aſked by Mr. Winterton whether I had come into that part of the world to get recruits?—This unexpected queſtion confuſed me exceſſively; I heſitated, caſt down my eyes, and with difficulty replied—

"I am not at preſent in the Army."

The company perceived my embarraſſment, and the ladies riſing, took that opportunity to retire. I alſo aroſe from my ſeat, and bowed to them as they paſſed; Julia was the laſt, and on quitting the room, ſhe gave me a look that reſtored me to ſome degree of compoſure.

We then reſumed our ſeats, and Mr. Winterton deſired me to ſit next to him; he politely apologized for having indiſcreetly aſked a queſtion which he was fearful had excited ſome diſagreeable recollections; and added, whatever my concerns might be, I might invariably depend on his friendſhip and exertions in my behalf.

This offer inſpired me with confidence; and the reſt of the company being engaged in converſation at the other end of the table, I felt diſpoſed to communicate my deſign to him.—I told him that a chain of unfortunate circumſtances had induced me to attempt trying the ſtage. He ſtarted,

and having conſidered me attentively for ſome time, exclaimed—"Good God, is it poſſible!" and ſuddenly, as if he recollected himſelf, coolly ſaid, that although he had not much influence that way, I might depend on his endeavours to ſerve me.

The warmth with which he had offered me his friendſhip, a few minutes before, had vaniſhed; a cold and repelling civility had taken its place, and pierced my heart.

"What!" thought I, "is it poſſible that the mere name of a profeſſion ſhould produce ſuch a change?—It can only ariſe from a weak mind, or

or the prejudices of education.—Why ſhould I ſuffer myſelf to be ſo acutely affected by another's opinions?—I deſpiſe them, and ought to be above them. I have at leaſt the conſolation of knowing that a heart which palpitates with tenderneſs and love, approves the motives which have tempted me to this enterpriſe. Of what conſequence to me is the condemnation of an unfeeling world while Matilda approves?"

While theſe reflections were paſſing in my mind, tea was announced, and we retired to the withdrawing-room. I had not yet experienced all the mortification and chagrin I was doomed

to

to ſhare this day. During the time we were taking tea, the converſation by chance turned on the Theatre, and with pleaſure I heard Miſs B——n mentioned with reſpect and admiration. Several other performers were alſo named, their talents compared and applauded, their defects freely cenſured and condemned.

"What," thought I, "will be my fate? If men would attentively conſider the dangers of the ſituation, and the difficulty of acquiring the ſuffrages of the public, they would judge with more reflection, and condemn with leſs ſeverity."

The

The lovely Julia, who ſat next me, aſked me if I were fond of plays.

"Extremely ſo," I replied.

"There is nothing that affords me more real pleaſure," ſhe rejoined; "and I do not conceive that the utmoſt effort of human genius can ſurpaſs the repreſentation of a good tragedy."

She uttered this remark with ſuch feeling and energy, that I could ſcarcely refrain from preſſing her to my boſom.

Our

Our converſation was here interrupted by a gentleman ſaying, that a new actor was ſhortly to appear, of whom report ſpoke very favourably; and that he was ſuperior to the generality of comedians, having been an Officer in the Army.

The eyes of all the company were immediately turned towards me.—The concurring circumſtances of my narration, and my ſubſequent embarraſſment, led them to ſuſpect what my evident confuſion then abſolutely confirmed. I felt as if the floor was ſinking under my feet. Mr. Winterton, with conſiderable addreſs, changed the converſation, which greatly

greatly contributed to the recovery of my firmneſs.

I then looked at Julia; her eyes were fixed on me, and eloquently expreſſed intereſt and ſurpriſe; I thought ſhe ſeemed to conſider me as ſomewhat more than an acquaintance of an hour. I could not however, notwithſtanding my utmoſt efforts, totally diveſt myſelf of my embarraſſment, and therefore determined to quit the company. I went to the window to take my hat; every one of the party aroſe from their ſeats. Mrs. Winterton, with more than her accuſtomed coolneſs, requeſted me to ſtay ſupper, which I refuſed, and bowing to the company, left the room.

room. Mr. Winterton attended me to the door, and I quitted the houſe without much ceremony.

I haſtened to my chamber, very uneaſy and much oppreſſed; but in reviewing my conduct of that day, I found nothing to blame.—Why did I betray ſymptoms of criminality when I was confident of never having been guilty of a bad action?—The contemptible view in which I muſt have appeared to the company I had quitted, made a painful impreſſion upon my mind, which I could not alleviate but by avowing to you my weakneſs and my folly.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 21.

WHEN I reflect on what a letter I wrote to you, three days ſince, I bluſh at the recollection. I am prepared for your cenſure; and, however ſevere it may be, it will not ſurpaſs that I have already inflicted on myſelf;—it has been effectual, and I am now perfectly

fectly calm.—But, my dear friend, am I not more an object of your pity than of your reproach? for such is the violence of my feelings, in the most common incidents of life, that I should sink under their effects if I had not one to whom I could communicate them immediately. Be then indulgent of your friend's little follies. By exposing my heart to you, humbly receiving your amicable reprimands, and forcing myself to imitate your happy philosophic disposition, I may, perhaps, learn to correct the defects of mine; they are in fact too deeply rooted to be subdued merely by the power of reason and reflection.

Every

Every thing ſucceeds agreeably to my wiſhes—I have reaſon to be ſatisfied with every one with whom I have concern here; yet am I unhappy. I look with fear and dread on the moment that I am to appear before the tribunal of the public.—At leaſt, if my friends have not deceived me, I have no reaſon to doubt the gifts which Nature has beſtowed on me; but to exhibit the moſt brilliant talents with advantage, requires a certain combination of fortunate events and circumſtances, which rarely occurs.

The Manager of the Theatre, whoſe attentions to me are highly flattering,

left

left the evening for my *dèbut*, to my own choice.—I fixed next Tueſday.

I have been here more than three weeks, and have not yet had a letter from Matilda!—I know not how to account for it, and am actually in torture.—Should I receive a letter from her before next Tueſday, it will calm my mental perturbation, and greatly influence my fate.—I cannot doubt her ſincerity without doubting the exiſtence of virtue.—What can be the cauſe of her ſilence?—Probably indiſpoſition, or ſome unexpected occurrence. But I will not trouble you with vain ſuſpicions.—Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER VII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 24.

THE violent agitation I experienced has, within theſe two or three days, unexpectedly and gradually ſubſided. Matilda's ſilence only appears to me inexplicable;—I reflect on her promiſes, and I am obliged to exert the utmoſt efforts of reaſon to prevent me

me from relapſing to my former ſtate of anxiety.

I contemplate to-morrow's ſcene with confidence and tranquillity; it is however at intervals in ſome degree weakened by Matilda's unaccountable ſilence. Can you blame my uneaſineſs?—My exiſtence is attached to that celeſtial woman—my ſoul forms not a wiſh but in concert with her.—Could I ſuppoſe her capable of forgetting me, my only remaining wiſh would be that I might inſtantly be deprived of life.

Yeſterday morning, finding myſelf in a more happy ſtate of mind than I had

had been ſince my arrival, I, after breakfaſt, went to walk on the ramparts. While I was conſidering the beautiful proſpects which ſurrounded me, I heard myſelf called by ſome one behind me; I turned, and ſaw the lovely Julia Winterton. She was accompanied by her youngeſt ſiſter;—we walked together on the hill, talked of the uncommon fineneſs of the weather, and during two or three turns converſed on various different ſubjects. A pauſe of ſome minutes then enſued; ſhe looked extremely intereſting, then ſuddenly, and with a look of ineffable ſweetneſs, ſaid—

"By the public papers, I find you are to make your firſt appearance to-morrow evening. All our family will be there, and I believe they are all as anxious for the reſult as yourſelf.—If I had never ſeen you, I ſhould have been intereſted for you; but ſince I have the pleaſure of knowing you, I feel for your ſituation as if it were my own."

I was going to expreſs my gratitude for her kindneſs, but ſhe checked me by obſerving that ſhe thought I was happy in my choice of the character I was to appear in, and ſpoke of the poetry and acceſſaries of the piece in

in a ſtyle that evinced a mind highly cultivated.

Her converſation was engaging, and her manners attracting;—a ſingle glance from the expreſſive eyes of this charming girl is ſufficient to inſpire the moſt lively ſentiments of admiration and reſpect. The idea that ſhe would be preſent on the following evening, imparted to me a conſiderable degree of confidence, and I longed for the hour I was to appear before her, under the form of Young Norval. I felt regardleſs of the applauſes of the multitude, but the approbation of Julia, and of the very few others

poſſeſſing ſimilar ſentiments, would gratify my utmoſt wiſhes.

Before we parted, I took the liberty of aſking her whether I might again enjoy the happineſs her ſociety and converſation afforded me.—She made no reply, but looked at her ſiſter, and then at me ſo expreſſively, as to render words unneceſſary to ſay I ſhould. I then bowed, and left them.

I muſt here cloſe my letter; I am going to dine with the Manager of the Theatre.—Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

JULIA TO SOPHIA.

November 24.

IF I thought it neceſſary to juſtify my ſilence to my Sophia, I could offer ſeveral reaſons, which I know her kindneſs would readily admit; but I conceive that, between friends, apologies are uſeleſs and ſuperfluous.—Attached to each other by a ſimilarity

of taſte, character, and ſentiment, the friendſhip we contracted in our infancy, when I had the happineſs of being conſtantly with you, while under the care of the exemplary Mrs. G——, will not I hope terminate but with our exiſtence.

I ſhould feel myſelf comfortleſs and unhappy, did I not poſſeſs a friend like you, to whom I can unreſervedly communicate my every wiſh and thought. Your ſuperior judgment always rendered you adequate to being my preceptreſs, and the placidity of your diſpoſition renders you abſolute miſtreſs of every tumultuous paſſion. How often have I profited by your example,

example, and learned under various circumſtances to reſtrain that ſenſibility, of which my feeble character is chiefly compoſed!

Although I love my ſiſters with the tendereſt affection, there is not one of them I could make my confidante;—they are all ſenſible and accompliſhed, but they want a certain ſomething (which, though I cannot explain, you will eaſily underſtand) to gain the unlimited confidence of a ſuſceptible heart. When any thing oppreſſes me, my only relief is unboſoming myſelf to you; and it is now neceſſary to expoſe my heart to your friendly view.

and he turned quickly round with an air of aſtoniſhment;—he appeared pleaſed at the interruption, and inſtantly joined us.

During our walk I endeavoured to convey to him my eſteem for the profeſſion he had choſen.—I ſhould have been extremely vexed had he thought me as illiberal as ſome of my family.

I muſt not forget to mention that he is a military man, and was in actual ſervice the greater part of laſt war.—All our family purpoſe attending the Theatre to-morrow evening. Although I have not the ſmalleſt

doubt

doubt of Mr. Horton's acquitting himſelf with applauſe, I feel a conſiderable degree of anxiety for him.—Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER IX.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 26.

MR. HORTON'S ſucceſs has been beyond expectation; and, as I know my Sophia participates in every ſentiment of her friend, I cannot refrain from communicating to you the pleaſure I experienced.—He was received with reiterated applauſes, which were in

in my opinion juſtly beſtowed. All the ſpectators teſtified their approbation of his talents and merits by repeated acclamations from every part of the Theatre.

Do you not think the conſideration obtained by perſonal qualifications, is far preferable to the baſe adulation laviſhed on manufactured Nobles, the rich and powerful?

I muſt candidly confeſs I feel an uncommon portion of pleaſure on Mr. Horton's being thus flatteringly received. You know, my dear Sophia, that from my natural diſpoſition, I ſhould have intereſted myſelf

for any ſtranger in a ſimilar ſituation; and I therefore hope you will not blame the lively partiality I expreſs for this young man, who is perhaps ſtriving againſt misfortune; the idea of which is painful to me.—I cannot enjoy tranquillity when I ſee virtue in diſtreſs.

This ingenuous manner of expreſſing myſelf might perhaps appear improper in the eyes of a misjudging world; but you, who know my heart, will appreciate its juſt value;—you will not condemn the ſentiments which chance has involuntarily given riſe to, and which will ever be directed by virtue.—Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER X.

HORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

November 26.

IT is over, and Fortune has for once befriended me.—I was yeſterday even-ing received with unbounded applauſe by a numerous and brilliant audience.

Notwithſtanding my preceding re-ſolution, I felt a conſiderable degree of

of terror when I went to the Theatre. During the whole of the day I had experienced many painful doubts, and was much deranged; this agitation, and ſome diſagreeable reflections which forced themſelves on my troubled mind, rendered me depreſſed and melancholy. When the moment of trial approached, it was with difficulty I acquired reſolution to advance: I trembled exceſſively, but the flattering reception I met with, ſoon reſtored my confidence, and I yielded entirely to the illuſion of the ſcene.

At the concluſion of the performance I received numerous compliments and

and gratulations from a number of gentlemen, who came purpoſely behind the ſcenes; but what ſurpriſed and pleaſed me moſt, was the unexpected appearance of Mr. Winterton. He ſhook me cordially by the hand, and in very animated terms expreſſed the high degree of ſatisfaction he felt at my ſucceſs. He politely aſked me to favour him with my company to ſupper; but being engaged with the Manager, I was compelled to refuſe the intended honour.

I retired from the Theatre with a degree of glory equal to that of a conqueror who has obtained a victory. This morning, however, the ſenſations

tions I experienced were very different.

Some expreſſions in your letters, my deareſt friend, have excited my fears.—Matilda you ſay has been ill; that is certainly a full juſtification for her ſilence;—but now that ſhe is recovered, my anxiety increaſes.—What can be the cauſe of her not writing to me?—It ſhakes my very ſoul with dread!

I ought, you ſay, to diveſt myſelf of every idea that may tend to weaken the energy ſo neceſſary for the profeſſion I have adopted.—Heaven grant I could follow your ſalutary advice!—

but

but that cannot be. Matilda is ever preſent to my imagination, and if ſhe abandons me, of what value is the world, and all it poſſeſſes, to me?

LETTER

LETTER XI.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

November 30.

ALL is illuſion—things which we ſee at a certain diſtance, loſe their power and their charms when within our graſp. Our happineſs is purely ideal, whether it is derived from the pleaſures of ſenſe, or the more delicate paſſions of the ſoul. The contemplation of immortal renown,

renown, and the momentary acclamations of the multitude are equally illuſory and unſatisfactory. The extraordinary attractions of the Theatre vaniſh on a near approach, and the ſituation of a performer, which, to the diſtant ſpectator, appears encircled with magic charms, ſoon becomes inſipid, and an object of diſguſt.

I have appeared a ſecond time, and applauſe was, if poſſible, more liberally beſtowed than on the firſt night. Although Julia was again preſent, I did not feel the ſatisfaction and pleaſure I enjoyed on Tueſday night.—For what in fact am I to exerciſe my talents, if ſhe, for whom I rejoice in poſſeſſing

poſſeſſing them, deſpiſes my efforts? I cannot accuſe her of miſerable caprice, whom I have firmly conſidered as the model of every virtue; yet ſay, have I not cauſe to complain?—No, I muſt ſubmit to the neceſſity which impoſes her ſilence, and avoid precipitately blaming the perverſity of incident, which ſhe, no doubt, regrets as ſincerely as myſelf.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

JULIA TO SOPHIA.

December 2.

WHEN my heart, my dear Sophia, is ill at eaſe, my only conſolation is communicating with you; and though I cannot explain the cauſe of my ſorrows, I muſt relate them to you, which employment will temporarily ſuſpend their deſolating effect.—Even

to you I make the avowal of my weakneſs with dread, when I inform you that I experience ſenſations more delicate and irritable than ever. Except for a few momentary intervals, I have totally loſt the tranquillity I formerly enjoyed, and my heart is oppreſſed with a languor hitherto a total ſtranger to my boſom. While the countenances of my ſiſters expreſs hilarity and joy, and every thing around me has the appearance of happineſs and gaiety, I can ſcarcely ſuppreſs my tears, and my lips, trembling with ſorrow, rarely relax into a ſmile.

My mother, who perceives my depreſſion, conceives I am unwell.—

Heaven

Heaven knows I am really ill, though I have no cauſe of complaint; but I have often thought that the maladies moſt to be complained of, are thoſe which ariſe from the affections of the ſoul.

I muſt acknowledge, and have frequently declared to my mother, that the unreſtrained ardour with which Mr. Boulton perſeveres in ſoliciting a return to his inſufferable love, occaſions me conſiderable inquietude. I can never love him, and conſequently will never, if it be in any way avoidable, become his wife. My parents conſider him as a very advantageous match, becauſe he is to inherit an

extremely rich uncle. But riches would not contribute to my happineſs in the leaſt—I wiſh not for them. My father has ſufficient to place all his children above want, and in fact, thanks to the generoſity of my dear aunt, I am already ſufficiently rich.

Mr. Boulton, it is true, is conſidered as a very amiable young man; but, agreeably to my ideas, he is defective in what alone can give value to riches and good qualities;—in a word, my dear Sophia, he ſeems totally devoid of feeling.—How incongruous would be our union!—What recompence could I expect for ſuch a ſacrifice?—The poſſeſſion of a diadem would

would be none.—If ever I change my condition, I ſhall either be a moſt happy, or a moſt unhappy woman. When we ſee, in the circle of our acquaintances, the very few who are happy, is not the idea of marrying ſufficiently alarming?—When it occurs to me, I have the conſolation of hope; but with Boulton, I am deprived of that.

My father has lately conceived a very great attachment to Mr. Horton; he has detained him ſeveral times to dinner. There is, however, ſomething myſterious in my father's conduct towards him; he was certainly favourably diſpoſed towards him from the

Though he has played ſeveral times, and each with increaſed reputation, I cannot ſuppreſs an idea which has ariſen in my mind, that his ſentiments are too refined for the profeſſion he has choſen, and that it will too ſoon corrupt the native goodneſs of his diſpoſition.

How exquiſite would be the pleaſure to a generous heart, to procure this accompliſhed man the means of exerciſing the talents which Nature has beſtowed on him, in ſome way leſs dangerous to himſelf!—But I fear, my dear friend, that ſuch diſintereſted generoſity is not to be met with in this age. The wretched and the deſerving

deſerving claim not the attention of the powerful; the vices of the rich and great are flattered and applauded, while poor, ſuffering Virtue mourns unpitied and unheard.

LETTER XIII.

HORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

December 5.

I CANNOT longer ſupport the fever which conſumes me.—I muſt know the cauſe of Matilda's ſilence—that only can relieve my burning brain.—For ſome time I have momentarily expected a letter from her, and my hopes being daily deceived, have

increaſed the oppreſſion of my heart. Be kind enough to convey the enclоſed letter to her.—Can it be leſs agreeable than thoſe which have preceded it?—The thought torments me.

My ideas are ſo confuſed, and my ſpirits ſo agitated, that I can ſcarcely write.—Excuſe the incoherency of this note;—you muſt be well convinced I have reaſon to be diſcontented.

LETTER XIV.

(Enclosed in the preceding.)

HORTON TO MATILDA.

TORMENTED by inquietude, and overwhelmed with sorrow, I have once more presumed to disclose my feelings to my dear Matilda.—I will not wound her heart by a recital of what I have suffered from her silence—mine is so well known to her, that in fact it would be

be uſeleſs. It is not my intention to requeſt her to do any thing ſhe does not entirely approve, and I hope ſhe will not think the deſire I feel of being made acquainted with the cauſe of her cruel ſilence, unreaſonable. I will not for a moment attribute it to an alteration in her ſentiments—it would be entertaining too injurious ſuſpicions;—but the difficulty of aſſigning any reaſonable motive renders me extremely unhappy.

I beg of you, or rather conjure you, by the remembrance of our tender attachment, by our oaths, and by the hope of our future happineſs, to clear up my doubts.—If you ſay that it is incon-

inconvenient to engage in a regular correſpondence with me, I will force myſelf to conform to it; and though each day, rendered melancholy by your abſence, will become leſs ſupportable by your ſilence, I ſolemnly ſwear to ſubmit to the ſevere deciſion without a murmur.

I will not afflict you by recalling to your memory the vows you have ſo often received with apparent pleaſure and ſatisfaction;—the diſtance, and the neceſſity which impoſes my abſence, only contribute to the ardour of my affection, though I have frequently thought it could not be augmented.—I have too much confidence

in

in the ſincerity of your heart to think it can have changed againſt me, and I am convinced it will dictate a prompt anſwer to this.—I ſhall count the moments until the return of the poſt, with the hope that my wiſh will be realized.—Farewel, deareſt Matilda, and may every happineſs be thine!

LETTER

LETTER XV.

JULIA TO SOPHIA.

December 15.

MR. HORTON is actually on ſuch an intimate footing in our family, that he ſometimes invites himſelf to take tea with us without the uſual ceremony. My father receives him with cordiality and friendſhip; my mother conducts herſelf at leaſt with civility, and he appears

appears pleaſed with the change. To the former he is eaſy, open, and unreſerved; with the latter he is reſerved, and I perceive a ſtiffneſs in his manners, which would be a poignant reproach to a feeling mind.—All my ſiſters appear diſpoſed to treat him with friendlineſs; and as for myſelf, I need not ſay I always find his converſation highly agreeable.

Yeſterday evening the whole of our family went to a card party; a violent head-ache compelled me to keep houſe, and as I was ſitting alone in the parlour, engaged in peruſing the Tragedy of Runnimede, an elegant production of a Scotch Clergyman, Mr. Horton

Horton was announced. Though he forced himſelf to appear eaſy, and frequently attempted to ſmile, I could plainly perceive his mind was ill at eaſe.

After ſome minutes' converſation I gave him the book I had been reading, and deſired him to read to me, which he did ſo pathetically, and in ſuch an intereſting manner, that I was particularly impreſſed; and every ſenſe, except that of terror, which he excited, ſeemed obliterated. Animated by the ſubject, he left his ſeat, and ſtanding at a little diſtance from me, continued reading until he came to that exquiſite ſcene between the two principal

principal perſonages, in the fifth Act, when he read a paſſage which he conceived analogous to his ſituation, with uncommon energy; he then threw the book from him, and burſt into tears.

I was alarmed, and went towards him; for ſome minutes we could neither of us ſpeak; at length I aſked him the cauſe of his tears.—He preſſed my hand gently, and in a tone, indicating a heart torn with ſorrow, he replied—

"Excuſe my folly—I feel I am unfit for ſociety; and except to ſuch a heart

heart as your's, I ſhould appear ridiculous and contemptible."

I endeavoured to tranquillize him, and ſucceeded.

After we had been ſeated a little time, he ſaid to me, in an accent of deſpair, that for the moment ſeemed to check the circulation of my life's current—

"You ſee before you the unhappieſt man breathing!"

I ſhrieked unconſciouſly—"Great God, is it poſſible?"

I know

I know not how it happened, but I found my hand within his. An extraordinary ſenſation pervaded my whole frame, and I felt my cheeks ſuffuſed with a burning ardour; but it was not the tint of ſhame, and I hope I am not condemnable.

When we were ſomewhat recovered, he diſcloſed to me the cauſe of his unhappineſs.—Love, my dear Sophia, as I have long thought, is the ſource of his woe; he is attached, by the tender bonds of reciprocal affection, to a young lady whom he has left in London, but ſince his arrival here he has not heard from her.—How unworthy muſt be the heart that could

ſport

ſport with the feelings of another ſo acutely ſenſible as his!

He was too much agitated to give me a circumſtantial account of his ſituation; but he ſpoke of the object of his affection with ſuch delicacy and tenderneſs, that I was delighted, and I cannot but conſider her as the happieſt woman on earth.

He obſerved that nothing would contribute more to enable him to ſupport his woes, than a tender friend to whom he could unboſom himſelf, and in whoſe breaſt he could find conſolation; that from the firſt moment he ſaw me, he felt attached to me by

ſome

ſome ſecret power, " which could only be," added he, with a faint ſmile, " the genius of ſenſibility;" and that friendſhip only could preſerve him from thoſe cruel ſhocks under which he ſhould inevitably ſink, if deprived of ſuch relief.

My heart acknowledged the force of this obſervation, and I told him that as I could not ſufficiently expreſs my gratitude for the good opinion he entertained of me, I ſhould always be happy to have the opportunity of proving it to him by my actions; that my eſteem for his character, and—and——Here my voice faltered;—I was confuſed, and could not recollect what

what I wiſhed to ſay.—He ſaw my embarraſſment, reſpectfully took my hand, and with a look of grateful acknowledgment, gently preſſed it between his.

At this moment Mr. Boulton abruptly entered the room.—Mr. Horton had ſufficient preſence of mind to ſnatch up the play, which was near him, and to read aloud, which gave me an opportunity of regaining the compoſure Mr. Boulton's unexpected viſit had deſtroyed; not that the dread of his reſentment gave me the leaſt uneaſineſs, but the illiberal ſuſpicions Mr. Horton's preſence might give riſe to. Mr. Boulton and he were never

never friendly, and in fact, their minds ſeem to be differently organized.

Mr. Horton only ſtaid a few minutes; and Mr. Boulton being engaged to ſupper, I was ſoon relieved from the diſagreeable ſenſations his company always excites.

Until the return of my father and the reſt of the family, I was occupied in reflecting on the events of the evening. I confeſs I felt myſelf deeply intereſted for Mr. Horton's unhappy ſituation; and, though the ſenſations I experienced yeſterday evening, were very different to thoſe I had till then

felt, I am fully convinced that the eſteem I entertain for him, does not exceed the bounds of the moſt diſintereſted friendſhip.

Why, my deareſt friend, is that virtue, which the world calls prudence, ſo often in oppoſition to the moſt delicate ſentiments of the human heart?—Certainly it was invented by one of thoſe cold, phlegmatic beings, who employ it occaſionally as a cloak to their inſenſibility.

Why ſhould a woman, dignified by conſcious innocence, bluſh to acknowledge to the other ſex the virtuous ſentiments of eſteem and ſympathy

pathy which the moſt amiable qualities of the human heart never fail to inſpire?—I ſee no reaſon that ſhould prevent it.

But I will not bewilder myſelf in fruitleſs and painful enquiries. I am reſolved to cultivate the friendſhip, and become the confidante of Mr. Horton's ſecrets; and while my own judgment does not condemn my reſolution, I think I ſhall not overſtep the bounds of propriety.

My brother, who is in London, has obtained leave of abſence to paſs the holidays with us, and we hourly

18839B

expect him;—his presence, no doubt, will considerably augment the happiness and satisfaction of all the family.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

HORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

December 16.

I HAVE been deceived, and have alſo deceived myſelf:—The profeſſion I have adopted does not accord with my ſentiments and diſpoſition—it already feels burdenſome to me.—In fact my ſpirits are ſo depreſſed, that I

am not really fit for any thing, and, in ſuch a ſtate, to be obliged to expreſs ſentiments totally ſtrangers to my boſom, is aſſuredly a moſt inſupportable tyranny;—I would rather labour in the fields, than perform a part that the ſtate of my feelings prevents me, without the moſt painful exertions, from entering into the ſpirit of.

Indeed, my friend, I am completely wretched.—While I thought, by my talents, to place myſelf above the inquietudes of dependance, I felt a ray of hope; but now I find my ſenſibility is an inſuperable obſtacle to the completion of my object.—I am, however,

however, determined to perſevere, and I will learn to moderate my feelings, or periſh in the ſtruggle.

LETTER XVII.

JULIA TO SOPHIA.

December 20.

I AM fully informed of the particulars of Mr. Horton's ſituation;—the heart-ſoftening narration has drawn repeated tributes of tears, and I can ſcarcely recal it to my memory without conſiderable emotion.—I feel myſelf inadequate to impart to the narrative

rative that tone of intereſt with which it was related to me; but I will endeavour to give you the principal traits.—Callous muſt be the boſom that could liſten to them without being intereſted;—my Sophia, whoſe ſentiments ſo exactly coincide with mine, will, I know, feel the moſt animated compaſſion for the ſuffering Horton.

On Tueſday laſt it was agreed that we ſhould paſs the day at our country-houſe, which, you know, is ſeven miles from here; and it being a clear froſty day, it was determined we ſhould walk. Our party conſiſted of ſeven ladies and five gentlemen,

among whom was Mr. Horton; and about eleven o'clock we departed.

Before we had got out of the town, it occurred to me that I had forgotten to give ſome neceſſary directions to the ſervants during our abſence: I mentioned it to my mother; ſhe deſired me to return, and they would proceed ſlowly on, that I might ſooner rejoin them. Mr. Horton inſiſted on accompanying me.

I was detained longer than I expected, and on returning, when we got out of the town, we ſaw none of our party. Finding ourſelves alone, and my mind being deeply impreſſed with

with the converſation we had had two or three days before, I thought it a favourable opportunity of reminding Mr. Horton of his promiſed confidence. The moment I expreſſed my wiſh, he ſaid—

"Why do you remind me of a circumſtance I ought to bluſh at ever having thought of?—I muſt entreat you to forget my having been guilty of making a promiſe ſo dangerous to your repoſe.—Why ſhould I communicate to you what will give you pain?—It would be better for ever to confine the ſecret in my grief-worn heart!"

"You have," I exclaimed, "greatly wronged my friendſhip by firſt flattering me with the hope of obtaining your confidence, a circumſtance which would have clearly manifeſted the high eſteem you entertained for me, and now deſtroying my hopes by this mortifying reſerve. I muſt conclude that you have diſcovered ſomewhat in my conduct which has diſſipated the favourable opinion you once had of me."

"Oh ſay not ſo," he cried with warmth; "every time I ſee you augments my eſteem, and the rank you aſſign me among your friends, imparts a ſatisfaction to my boſom I

have long been a ſtranger to. Your generous conduct towards me, on my firſt viſit, gives you a ſacred right to my gratitude; but it is with a view to your own happineſs that I would rather decline entering on a recital, which I know will wound your ſuſceptible heart."

"The uneaſineſs I now feel," I replied, "and the melancholy conjectures I form, are probably more painful to me than the real circumſtances might be."

Here he interrupted me, ſaying—

"If,

"If ſo, it is my duty to ſatisfy you.—If the intereſt you take in the fate of an unfortunate being, is the ſource of inquietude to you, I feel compelled, however it may affect me, to communicate the particulars of my ſituation to you."

Here he pauſed a moment, and then proceeded as follows:—

"It would be uſeleſs to relate the events of my early life: I ſhall obſerve that my parents are of an ancient and reſpectable Scotch family, from whom I received a very liberal education; my father's eſtate being ſmall, and his family numerous, I at

an

an early age entered into the Army.—At eighteen years of age, I was ſent on an expedition to our colonies; during this period I traverſed many countries, and was expoſed to many inconveniences and dangers. If I had not been ſo fortunate as to meet with ſome opportunities of diſtinguiſhing myſelf, which rarely happen to a ſubaltern Officer, I ſhould nevertheleſs have had the ſatisfaction of knowing I always did my duty. Soon after the laſt war I returned to England, and at the peace I was reduced to half-pay.

"After an abſence of ſix years, I was anxious to viſit the place of my nativity,

nativity, and to behold my parents. But, alas! during my abſence, their domeſtic happineſs had been terribly ravaged: Misfortune had perſecuted them with inconceivable fury. The remains of a dilapidated fortune, which was however ſufficient to place them above want, had been torn from them by an infamous trick, concealed under the ſpecious veil of diſintereſted friendſhip. To obtain them relief, I inſtantly ſold my commiſſion, and of its produce only reſerved a ſmall ſum to ſupport me in London, until I could procure ſome eſtabliſhment.

"The glowing ſatisfaction I enjoyed from this act of filial piety, ſupported

ported me under the gloomy depreſſiveneſs of my future proſpects; and on the goodneſs and juſtice of Him, who had inſpired me with ſuch ſentiments towards my parents, I firmly relied for relief. It was nearly winter when I returned to London; and I had not the leaſt doubt, but on addreſſing myſelf to ſome of the Officers with whom I had ſerved, I ſhould obtain ſome advantageous ſituation.

" A friend on whom I could depend, and whoſe talents and humanity rendered him an ornament to his profeſſion, introduced me to a perſon high in power, who inſtantly promiſed to employ me; at the ſame time aſſured

aſſured me he ſhould always be happy to ſee me, and conſtantly received me with politeneſs and civility.

" It was at this period I became acquainted with Matilda—ſhe appeared to me the handſomeſt woman I had ever ſeen. She was then about ſeventeen years of age, of a fine height and ſlender form, and agreeable, open, and animated in her manners. From the firſt moment I ſaw her, ſhe made an indelible impreſſion on my heart; and ſome circumſtances which ſoon afterwards occurred, confirmed me in the good opinion I had formed.—I learned that her father, who had lately arrived from Ireland to execute ſome literary

literary projects, was considerably embarrassed. It was not in my disposition to have the power of obliging, and withholding it, or to suffer those I considered virtuous and meritorious, to languish in distress: I shared my little property with them. Their gratitude was testified in the most energetic manner; but that of Matilda gave birth to a passion of a more tender nature.

"Transported to find myself beloved by such a beautiful and accomplished woman, I was lost in that delightful delirium which successful love produces. Weeks and months passed in the transcendent reciprocations

tions of affection; and I did not conceive that the trueſt happineſs could be beyond what I enjoyed. Her mother knew of our mutual paſſion, and her father, apparently guileleſs and unſuſpicious, did not ſeem to notice our attachment: under different pretexts he obtained from me all the money I poſſeſſed; but when my purſe was abſolutely exhauſted, and he perceived I could be of no further utility, he thought it convenient to throw off the maſk, and to ſhew the native deformity of his character.—I only do him juſtice when I ſay, that under the moſt ſpecious and plauſible pretexts, and under the ſacred appearances of friendſhip and kindneſs, he

he artfully concealed the poniard of ingratitude, and the deepeſt and blackeſt villany.

" One evening, at his own apartments, without the leaſt provocation, he loaded me with the moſt unmerited reproaches, and inſulted me in the groſſeſt manner. My conſternation and aſtoniſhment rendered me motionleſs; but ſoon rouſed by ſome reflections, which the verieſt coward could not have tamely borne, and fearing that my paſſion might lead me beyond the bounds of decency, I quickly retired from his preſence.

" I

"I cannot deſcribe to you the agitation in which I paſſed that night; his age, his profeſſion (for with regret I ſay he was a Clergyman) prevented me from adopting the accuſtomed mode of revenge; but a more material conſideration was, his being Matilda's father, and that alone was ſufficiently powerful to reſtrain me from chaſtiſing him. Extremely agitated, I wrote to Matilda what had occurred, and the ſtate of my feelings; for happily ſhe was abſent during her father's infamous treatment of me. I conveyed my letter to her by a young lady, with whom we were both acquainted, and by the ſame means received an anſwer, expreſſive of her unbounded

unbounded eſteem and ſincere affection.

" This aſſurance from Matilda conſiderably calmed my anxiety with reſpect to her; but it was greatly increaſed by another conſideration. My affairs were in the moſt alarming ſtate, as I only received promiſes from thoſe on whom I was totally dependant.—Is there any thing more terrible and depreſſing to a ſuſceptible heart than to wait for an eſtabliſhment from the protection of what the world calls—a great man?—I had frequently aſked, and repreſented my ſituation, but a promiſe was all I could obtain; and while I ſaw others at eaſe and independent,

pendent, it ſeemed as if I was deſtined to ſtudy the caprices of an unfeeling man, and great without principle.

"At length, rouſed by indignation and misfortune, I ventured to ſpeak the language of candour and of truth—a language to which the ears of the great are not accuſtomed. I urged the baſeneſs and injuſtice of amuſing any one with hopes, which were not to be realized.—My repreſentations were received with the apathy of cold ſuperiority; I was mortified and irritated, and quitted the houſe, vowing never to enter it again as a ſupplicant.

"I

"I found myſelf poor and friendleſs; it was therefore neceſſary to form ſome reſolution immediately.—I had always a taſte for the ſtage, and had made it a part of my ſtudies, and Nature ſeemed to have endowed me with talents which promiſed ſucceſs; and what had formerly contributed to my amuſement, was now my only dependance for exiſtence. I frankly communicated my intentions to Matilda, and had the ſatisfaction of receiving her unreſerved approbation. I inſtantly prepared to put my plan in execution: I wrote a tender letter to the object of my vows, and ſhe, attended by a friend, without the knowledge of her parents, indulged

me with ſeveral interviews at my lodgings.

" I wiſhed firſt to try my abilities on a provincial theatre; and a friend of mine being intimately acquainted with your father, gave me a letter to him, and another to the Manager of the Theatre at L——, to whom he is alſo known. It is impoſſible to expreſs to you what I felt on my ſeparation from Matilda; the only conſolation I expected was reading her letters, as ſhe promiſed to write to me as often as ſhe conveniently could;—I have not, however, heard from her theſe two months, nor can I, through the medium of my friend in London, diſcover

diſcover the cauſe of her ſilence.—Your heart only can form an idea of my ſufferings.—I am abandoned—cruelly abandoned by one whoſe love is dearer to me than my life; and, if I am deprived of her affection, the period of my exiſtence will ſoon be terminated."

He ſeemed overpowered with anguiſh, and with difficulty ſuppreſſed the ſtarting tear from trickling down his manly face. I felt little leſs agitated, and could not refrain from weeping.

We had now walked in ſilence about half a mile, when we found ourſelves

at a ſmall diſtance from our party; I haſtily wiped away my tears, and we endeavoured to aſſume an appearance of tranquillity. One of my ſiſters remarked, when we joined them, that my eyes were red and humid, which I attributed to the froſt. We ſoon arrived at our journey's end, and the day was paſſed extremely ſociably and pleaſantly;—the gentlemen returned to L—— late in the evening, but the ladies remained till the next day.

I do not mean to offer any comments to you on Mr. Horton's narrative; I ſhall only obſerve that many traits of his conduct are highly honourable to human nature. He has given

given me Matilda's letters, which is a mark of confidence I feel very ſenſibly. I can ſay nothing of them now; but in my next letter I will tranſcribe ſome particular paſſages, for which I have his permiſſion: they will enable you to form an opinion of her preſent conduct.

I have mentioned you to Mr. Horton, and he already eſteems you as you deſerve.—Farewel!

LETTER XVIII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

December 22.

KNOWING the impatience you will feel for the accompliſhment of the promiſe in my laſt letter, I will not delay gratifying it.

There are five of Matilda's letters, all written after her father's, improper

proper conduct. The firſt is an anſwer, dated the day after the rupture; it is conceived in the following terms:—

"To comply with your wiſhes, I ſeize the firſt opportunity of replying to your afflicting letter.—I need not tell you how painful my feelings were on reading it. The inſulting manner in which my father has treated you, preſſes heavily on my heart. How could he for a moment forget that you have been our beſt friend ſince we have had the happineſs of knowing you?—I wiſh ſincerely to comply with

the desire of my heart to see you, but I fear it is impracticable, since you are resolved never again to visit us.—I wish that the affection you express for me, was bestowed on one more deserving of it, and who could unreservedly express her gratitude for it.—Farewel!—That you may ever be happy, is the unceasing prayer of her, whose heart acknowledges the purest sentiments of the most tender affection for you."

The second is also written in language expressive of the most lively attachment.

"Be

" Be aſſured I will, if poſſible, ſee you before your departure.—The fear of its being the laſt time, perhaps, renders me imprudent, but I cannot avoid it.—Heaven grant I could ſee you oftener!—Need I ſay how dear your intereſts are to me?—In fact I have a thouſand anxieties for your happineſs, which I feel more poignantly than I can deſcribe them."

Some days after this, they had an interview at Matilda's friend's houſe: he conjured her to grant him another

before he departed, at the ſame time entreating her to write to him. The following appears to have been written the ſame evening they met.

" You muſt perceive, by my haſte, the pleaſure I feel in complying with your wiſhes. I write to requeſt the permiſſion of ſeeing you at your lodgings on Monday morning, as it is impoſſible to meet at my friend's houſe; if it will occaſion you the leaſt inconvenience, do not heſitate a moment in ſaying ſo.—By the extreme pleaſure which the idea of ſeeing you on Monday excites in my boſom, I can

judge of the exceſſive grief I ſhall feel on your departure, when I reflect that perhaps we ſhall be ſeparated for ever. —Oh! I cannot ſupport the idea that you may poſſibly be faithleſs, and forget the vows you have made of loving me, and which I have believed."

On Monday morning he received her at his lodgings, and ſhe afterwards ſent him this note:—

"Great God! what a happy hour I paſſed with you this morning!—

What, do I ſay with you!—is it poſſible?—It abſolutely appears to me like a dream.—Believe me, my dear, my amiable Horton, that I can never enjoy any real pleaſure but with you.—Why has not Fortune treated me more favourably?—My only wiſh would be to ſhare it with you; though would to Heaven my pen could do juſtice to my ſentiments, or that I could convince you of the ardency and ſincerity of my affection! But I become importunate, yet I hope you will pardon me: I ſhould be happy if you could procure me your picture. It is, however, almoſt an uſeleſs requeſt on my part; for it is engraven on my heart with an accuracy beyond the

the greateſt efforts of art to exceed.—You may depend on ſeeing me on Wedneſday, if poſſible.—Believe me, I do and ſay a thouſand things to obtain that pleaſure."

Wedneſday, which was two days previous to his departure, they had another interview; and on the following day, through the medium of her friend, ſhe ſent him a very empaſſioned letter, requeſting he would write to her the moment he arrived. Of this letter the following is a part:—

"The

"The morning has begun to dawn, and though I am indiſpoſed, I will endeavour to reply to your obliging letter. I ſhould wiſh, if it were poſſible, to ſee you before your departure; yet it is, perhaps, better I ſhould forego that pleaſure, for, on parting from you, I experience a thouſand torments worſe than death; which, however, I muſt now conſider as the happieſt event that could occur. The world has but one charm for me, and that I deſpair of poſſeſſing; therefore life is no longer valuable to me. —That Heaven may ſhower down its choiceſt bleſſings on you, is the ardent wiſh of your deſolate Matilda! —Farewel! Farewel!"

Such

Such are Matilda's letters.—How contrary is her preſent conduct to ſuch recently avowed ſentiments! When I conſider, my Sophia, the frequent and numerous examples of caprice and baſe ingratitude which many of our ſex ſo ſcandalouſly exhibit, I cannot ſuppreſs my deteſtation of them, and I could almoſt quarrel with Nature for having made a woman.—How happy ſhould that woman eſteem herſelf, who knows ſhe is loved by one whoſe heart, like Horton's, carefully appreciates the value of a tender attachment! But ſenſibility and ſentiment too often meet the moſt contrary

trary and leaſt merited deſtiny. Our intelligence is too thickly enveloped in the miſt of error to accuſe Providence, whoſe decrees are ever for the beſt.

My brother arrived yeſterday, and as we had not ſeen him for three years, his preſence imparted pleaſure to every boſom; to celebrate this event we to-morrow have a large dinner party, and a ball in the evening. Mr. Horton is invited; my father indeed treats him with the utmoſt attention. How powerful muſt be the influence of natural qualities, to ſurmount the violence of the moſt deep-rooted prejudices!—Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

HORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

December 29.

I WAS certainly deſtined to be the moſt unhappy and moſt unfortunate of men;—every thing conſpires to deſtroy my tranquillity, and I drink deeply of the cup of affliction. I am now fully convinced that there is a ſpecies of fatality attached to the actions

actions of ſome men, and mine are marked with the ſtamp of misfortune; each day of my life manifeſts this evidently. I ſhould be leſs unhappy if it only affected me, but even innocence and virtue are equally involved in my misfortunes. The only circumſtance which could increaſe my woe has occurred: I am for ever deprived of Julia's friendſhip!—But indeed I am ſo accuſtomed to ſorrow, that I feel this infliction leſs acutely than I thought was poſſible. I experience not the leaſt agitation while I communicate to you that the tender, the friendly, the amiable Julia is loſt to me for ever!

Oh my Jerningham! had you known her, you could better eſtimate the misfortune I have ſo much reaſon to deplore. However ſhort the time may appear for the formation of our mutual friendſhip, our ſouls were of ſuch accord, that it was only neceſſary they ſhould meet to attract reciprocally, and to unite by ſympathetic friendſhip.

Could I forget I had ever known Matilda, the cruel Matilda, who occaſions the torments I experience, and the tears which unceaſingly ſtream from my eyes, there is not another woman in the world to equal the innocent, the charming Julia. So little

is

is my attachment founded on the external appearances of her perſon, that I doubt whether I have ever told you they are in perfect uniſon with the beauty and excellence of her mind.—She is tall and well-formed, though rather inclined to corpulency; the delicacy of her features, while they inſpire admiration and deſire, impreſs the moſt licentious hearts with ſentiments of veneration and reſpect; her face is nearly oval; her auburn hair, in natural ringlets, float in delightful contraſt on a beautifully white neck; and her large blue eyes are indeſcribably expreſſive; they are all ſoul, and diſplay ſuch power of ſentiment, that though at the ſame time they evince extreme

extreme timidity, each glance thrills to the heart. Although ſhe is not yet twenty, her mind is uncommonly cultivated: to the ingenuouſneſs of youth, ſhe joins the maturity of age; her air is ſerious, and denotes the love of ſtudy; reading is her delight, and ſhe has always choſen that ſpecies ſuitable to the native ſweetneſs of her character.

Such is the friend which I have loſt by a ſeries of accidents, that have obliged me to ſhew the courage and firmneſs of a man; they have ſucceſsfully rouſed my mind from that ſpecies of lethargy into which my misfortunes had plunged it, but they are too

too violent to obtain permanent relief. Like a feeble reed, it has hitherto yielded to the tempeſt; but now, like an oak which has for many years ſupported the fury of the elements, is at length aſſailed by a violent ſtorm, bends, and falls extended on the plain.

When for a moment I reflect on my preſent ſituation, and what I might have been, it is more than human nature can ſupport;—when I contemplate the future, the clouds and darkneſs which encircle the proſpects, leave me not a ray of hope to guide me through the dreary waſte. Your generous friendſhip is the only conſolation

lation I have left; it affords me the means of eaſing my heart of the load of grief which oppreſſes it, and which it could not otherwiſe ſupport.

Although I was tolerably tranquil when I commenced this letter, in its progreſs my agitation has increaſed to ſuch a degree, as to compel me to relinquiſh my deſign until the torments which rend my heart ſhall in ſome degree have abated.

If Matilda has not totally forgotten me, or her heart is not become callous to my unhappineſs, ſhe will certainly, knowing ſhe has the power, contribute to calm and alleviate my ſufferings.

ings.—It is a conſolation, however, I deſpair of receiving.—Adieu, my friend!—To-morrow, perhaps, I may write again.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

December 30.

IT is now eight days ſince Mr. Winterton's youngeſt ſon, who is an Officer in the Army, as I have before mentioned to you, arrived here on a viſit to his friends; a day or two after this, I received a note of invitation from Mr. Winterton to dinner. Conceiving

the party might be numerous on this occaſion, I ſent a written excuſe. Soon afterwards Mr. W. called at my lodgings, and preſſed me ſo earneſtly and obligingly to dine with him, that I could not reſiſt his ſolicitations.

On the following morning I aroſe determined to appear gay, though contrary to the ſentiments of my heart, conceiving it would be improper to go, where hilarity and joy were to preſide, with a countenance indicating melancholy; I endeavoured to give my thoughts a different turn, by employing myſelf with trifles during the morning, and which had very conſiderable effect.

On

On my arrival at Mr. Winterton's, I found a numerous company aſſembled in the parlour, the greater part of whom were unknown to me; I however entered with more indifference than ever I was conſcious of before in my life. I was preſented to the young Officer and the reſt of the company; I then went towards Julia, who was at a window: ſhe received me with an air of complacency that ought to have imparted the ſatisfaction to my boſom I affected to evince by my manners and countenance.

Mr. Boulton, who pays his devoirs to Julia, with the hope of obtaining her hand, was ſtanding by her; I

entered into converſation with them, and ſhe congratulated me on the happy change in my appearance, adding, with a faſcinating ſmile—

"I think I can gueſs the cauſe."

I was charmed with her manner, and gaily replied—

"You, my dear Miſs Julia, are the principal—it is impoſſible to be unhappy in your ſociety."

Mr. Boulton inſtantly turned from us, rudely retained that poſition for a few minutes, and then retired to the other

other end of the room; ſoon after this dinner was announced.

I was not ſo happy as to be placed next to Julia, which was a conſiderable drawback on the pleaſure I had promiſed myſelf; I was ſeated between Mr. Boulton and the young Officer. In the courſe of the evening ſome circumſtances occurred which proved this arrangement to have been premeditated; they paid but little attention to me, and in ſuch a numerous company the converſation could not be general.

The two young gentlemen, between whom I ſat, ſpoke unceaſingly to each

other, by which I ſoon acquired a knowledge of their characters; for though I had often been in company with Mr. Boulton before, we had never, in our behaviour to each other, overſtepped the ſtricteſt limits of politeneſs. I ſoon diſcovered he was uninformed, and ſtrongly attached to his own opinions; that his ideas were bounded by an education merely ſuitable to a merchant's counting-houſe, and that he poſſeſſed no other merit than that which riches confer.

The young Officer, early emancipated from parental reſtriction and care, had arrogated to himſelf the airs and manners of a mature man; he was

was petulant, a great talker, and presumptuous to a high degree. Forgetting the attentions of the moſt common politeneſs, he every moment interrupted me if I began to ſpeak, and frequently whiſpered behind me to Mr. Boulton, as if I were an obſtacle to their intercourſe. Finding myſelf thus diſagreeably ſituated, I determined on being ſilent during dinner; yet, when I was removed, I did not find myſelf in the leaſt more comfortable.

The company formed itſelf into different ſmall parties, each having a particular ſubject of converſation; and Mr. Boulton and his friend continued

their inſulting behaviour, which deprived me of the opportunity of uttering a ſyllable. I ſaw Mr. Winterton frequently look at his ſon with evident marks of anger; but the young man was too much engaged with his friend, or too confident of his own importance to attend to them.

The ladies ſoon retired, and the wine circulating more freely, the gaiety of the company was leſs reſtrained. The young men, who were near me, drank ſo briſkly that the effect of their intemperance was quickly manifeſt; and young Winterton, addreſſing his friend, with an oath ſaid—

"I cannot conceive how a man, who has had the honour of ſerving his country and his King, can ſo debaſe himſelf as to engage in any profeſſion below the dignity of a gentleman."

This obſervation rouſed me from the inanity into which I had fallen; and conceiving it a favourable opportunity to join in the converſation, I replied—

"Your ſurpriſe would be more juſtly excited by thoſe in actual ſervice, many of whom degrade the profeſſion to which they have the honour of belonging."—This reflection warmed me, and ſpeaking with ſome

energy, I added—"It is true, the King can beſtow honours, but honours only do not conſtitute merit;—the profeſſion of arms is conſidered by moſt nations as one of the moſt honourable; but I have obſerved, with pain, that a red coat is too often a cloak for meanneſs and frivolity;—the heart only is the ſeat of honour, and that only can produce it; and whatever ſituation a gentleman may be in, his honour is equally ſacred."

"Yes," replied the young man, with an air of affected gravity, "in that I perfectly coincide with you;—but there are ſome profeſſions totally

incompatible with the character of a gentleman."

I clearly perceived the aim of this obſervation, but would not appear to underſtand it, and anſwered in a firm tone—

"In fact, the tyranny of cuſtom did, in ages leſs enlightened than the preſent, arbitrarily aſſign diſtinctions to certain claſſes of men; but now genius and virtue are diſtinguiſhed wherever they are met."

Mr. Boulton endeavoured to ſuppreſs a contemptuous ſmile; and young Winterton rudely exclaimed—

"I never heard an actor conſidered as a gentleman."

I ſaw this inſult had been premeditated, and the ſarcaſm conſiderably affected me. I aroſe, and addreſſed him thus—

"By being in your father's houſe, I at leaſt ſuppoſed I ſhould be ſecure from inſult; but finding myſelf deceived, I feel it neceſſary to quit a place where common civility to gentlemen," in ſaying this I looked ſtedfaſtly at Mr. Boulton, "is ſcandalouſly infracted.—The reſpect I have for your father withholds me from beſtowing that chaſtiſement your inſolence

lence merits; I hope, however, I ſhall have a more favourable opportunity of manifeſting my reſentment."

I then haſtened towards the door; but his father ſeized my arm, and entreated me not to retire; he declared himſelf extremely hurt at his ſon's brutal conduct, and inſiſted on his making me an apology in the preſence of the company.

The young man refuſed, until his father commanding him to comply in very warm terms, he with an ill grace conſented; but I checked him by ſaying—

"My

"My reſpect, Sir, for your father, influences me to pardon the groſs inſult I received from you;—I hope, however, it will convince you, for the future, of the impropriety of turning the ſentiments of any gentleman into ridicule."

He was ſilent, and Mr. Boulton, humbled, hung down his head. The harmony of the company was ſoon reeſtabliſhed, and my conduct was ſpoken of in high terms of approbation. Mr. Winterton was prodigal of his thanks and expreſſions of eſteem. We ſoon afterwards joined the ladies, and gaiety and happineſs ſeemed to animate the whole party.

Though

Though the occurrence I have related to you, conſiderably irritated me, yet the wine we afterwards drank, and the happy termination of our diſagreement, totally effaced every unpleaſing impreſſion from my mind, and elevated my ſpirits to an extraordinary degree. As was uſual with me, I had placed myſelf next to Julia, who aſked me, in a low voice, if I were fond of dancing.

"Formerly," I replied, "I was very partial to it; but it is long ſince I enjoyed the pleaſure it affords."

"Well," ſaid the lovely girl, "we ſhall have a dance this evening, but do

do not appear as if you knew of it; becauſe, as there is an equal number of ladies and gentlemen, you will be obliged to do the ſame as the reſt."

"Could I hope," I replied, "to have you for a partner, dancing, which otherwiſe would be fatiguing to me, will afford me extreme pleaſure."

She anſwered with a ſmile that was much more expreſſive than a formal conſent to my wiſhes, and our converſation ended.

Soon after tea, we heard the ſound of muſic in the adjoining room; the folding

folding-doors were opened, and the room appeared to have been purpoſely prepared for dancing. The gentlemen inſtantly led each his lady to it; and Mr. Boulton, who with young Winterton had not yet left their wine, now entered, and Mr. Boulton, advancing towards Julia, offered to lead her into the ball-room. She ſaid ſhe was engaged, and inſtantly withdrawing her hand from his, preſented it to me. Mr. Boulton quitted her with evident marks of chagrin and mortification, and was obliged to accept her youngeſt ſiſter as a partner.

The dance commenced, and its effects were electrical. The wine I had

ſhe ſeems to be only honouring her father's friendſhip. How many painful and ſorrowful moments has ſhe contributed to alleviate!—When I conſider that I ſhall be deprived of her friendſhip, I feel an acceſſion of ſorrow, and my courage ſinks under the painful idea.

My mind is not yet ſufficiently calm to give you a particular detail of thoſe occurrences, to which Mr. Boulton's and young Winterton's preceding conduct was only the prelude.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

THE SAME TO THE SAME

January 2.

TWO days after the event I related to you in my laſt, I, in the morning, went to pay my reſpects to Mr. Winterton; on approaching the houſe, I perceived ſome of the family at the window of the parlour fronting the ſtreet, and I was greatly ſurpriſed when

when a ſervant told me at the door, they were all from home. I, however, did not ſuſpect any thing, and returned to my lodgings, with the intention of paſſing the day in ſtudy. About an hour after this, one of Mr. Winterton's ſervants brought the following letter, ſaying he was not to wait for an anſwer :—

" SIR,

" When I introduced you to my family, I conſidered you as a gentleman; and when I admitted you as a friend, I thought it was a diſtinction you merited, though the profeſſion you

you have adopted, afforded you no grounds to expect it. I am ſorry to have been deceived.—Baſely profiting by my civilities and kindneſs, you have endeavoured to ſeduce my daughter. Such a proof of ingratitude is an outrage againſt the laws of ſociety.—I regret not having the power of puniſhing you otherwiſe than by perſonal reſentment; who, under the maſk of friendſhip, could form the vile project of irremediably deſtroying the peace of my family."

Incenſed at the injurious calumny this letter contained, I inſtantly replied to it in theſe terms:—

"SIR,

" SIR,

" It is impoſſible to expreſs the ſurpriſe the peruſal of the letter I have juſt received from you occaſioned.—Were it conceived in language leſs inſulting, I could eaſily clear myſelf from an imputation ſo falſe and ſcandalous; but I will not degrade myſelf by juſtifying my conduct in any way to one, who, without reaſon and without proof, could deſcend to ſuch groſs epithets.—With reſpect to the civilities you were pleaſed to ſhew me, I certainly ſhould expreſs my gratitude; but you have, in one moment, cancelled the value of many years' hoſpitality.

hoſpitality.—Your reflections on my profeſſion I readily pardon; my honour is more than ſufficient to ſupport me againſt the ſarcaſms of wretched prejudice. When the anger which now uſurps your reaſon ſhall be appeaſed, you will find that you have, from inſidious inſinuations, imprudently condemned a man, whoſe only crime is, perhaps, being unfortunate."

I immediately diſpatched this letter to Mr. Winterton; but I have never heard of him or of his family, further

I exiſt?—Where is the vaunted recompence of virtue?

In reviewing the actions of my paſt life, I ſcarcely find one that merits the leaſt reprobation; and yet, I am convinced, there is not a criminal more tortured than I am.

I think, and indeed I am almoſt perſuaded, I may attribute this misfortune to the machinations of Boulton and young Winterton; it may probably be only conjecture: but the time will, perhaps, come when the unclouded truth will appear, and when I ſhall be able to ſupport my opinion on the ſolid baſis of poſitive conviction.—I may

may be ſtrictly compared to a man who has his hands tied behind him, while another ſtrikes him with impunity.

only the effect of a troubled imagination. Such, in fact, is our weakneſs when ill, that we view every thing through the deceitful veil of jealouſy.

The intended ball has taken place, and I had the pleaſure of dancing with Mr. Horton. I am inclined to think the exerciſe of that evening, for I was very animated, was the ſole cauſe of my indiſpoſition. I have not been able to ſee him ſince; and, what is very extraordinary, no one has ever mentioned his name: he cannot be ill, for he has performed twice ſince the ball. I aſked one of my ſiſters if he had not called lately, and ſhe anſwered me, with an uncommon degree

gree of quickneſs—" What ſhould he do here when he cannot ſee you?"—I thought there was ſomething extraordinary and malicious in her manner.

As my ſiſter would not leave me while I wrote to you, I am obliged to conclude here. She aſked me, with a ſhew of authority, for which I cannot account, to whom I was in ſuch haſte to write, and why I did not wait till I was perfectly recovered?—What can be the cauſe of this proceeding?—Farewel!

LETTER XXIII.

HORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

January 10.

EACH day of my life is marked by ſome new incident, and I am progreſſively precipitated into the loweſt depths of misfortune. At the moment I thought my heart was laden with ſorrow beyond the power of further endurance, it was menaced by a

greater misfortune, and it ſtill palpitates under the cruel ſtroke.

I would conceal from you my real ſituation, as it would only excite your fears, and trouble your generous heart; but it is too public to remain long a ſecret from you.—Be not alarmed to hear I am in the hands of juſtice, and that the man whom you have honoured with your friendſhip, may, perhaps, be condemned to ſuffer an ignominious death!

To inform you of the circumſtances which have produced this event, I muſt enter into a detail which will probably try your patience; but, to

juſtify your friendſhip, I think it neceſſary to give you an exact account of every particular.

Two evenings ſince, while I was delivering at the Theatre, the pathetic ſoliloquy of "To be, or not to be," &c. in the Tragedy of Hamlet, ſome one from the gallery threw an apple, which ſtruck my left cheek, and fell at my feet. As I had never before received ſuch treatment, it affected me exceſſively; but judge of my ſurpriſe when I felt my face wet, and ſaw blood fall on the ſtage!—I took up the apple, and found it contained two ſharp blades, apparently of pen-knives.

I ad-

I advanced, ſhewed them to the audience, and addreſſed them thus:

" Ladies and Gentlemen, from the firſt moment I engaged in the ſervice of the public, I have made it my principal ſtudy to merit its favour and approbation;—the many flattering teſtimonies of applauſe I have received in this Theatre, have convinced me that the deſire of pleaſing will always be crowned with ſucceſs.—It is with aſtoniſhment I find here ſome ſecret enemy, who would as willingly deprive me of my life as of my reputation.—Fully perſuaded I have never deſerved the enmity of any perſon, I cannot but conſider myſelf ſingularly outraged by

by this ſavage aſſault, and I hope the goodneſs and generoſity of this audience will excuſe the deſire I feel to diſcover the perpetrator of an action, which would diſhonour even the ſanguinary hand of a hired aſſaſſin."

The ſtricteſt ſilence was obſerved during my addreſs; but two perſons, wrapped in horſemen's coats, and otherwiſe diſguiſed, who were ſeated in that corner of the gallery from whence the apple was directed, being obſerved to hiſs, attracted general attention. Some ſailors who were near them, enraged at ſuch a cowardly act, ſeized one of them as they endeavoured to eſcape, but the other got away

away undiſcovered. The ſailors exclaimed they had caught one of the raſcally offenders; and a general cry of, "Throw him over!" ſoon followed, and which the honeſt Tars ſeemed inclined to do, for they had dragged him to the front of the gallery, ſtripped him of his great-coat and ſlouched hat, when I perceived it was young Winterton, and inſtantly entreated them to deſiſt; but it was ſome minutes before I could perſuade them to forego inflicting on him this ſummary puniſhment. I then addreſſed myſelf to the audience, ſaying—I was ſorry the tranquillity of the Theatre ſhould have been diſturbed by ſo baſe an action; and that, if not diſagreeable

to

to them, I would, having diſcovered my enemies, wiſh the buſineſs to reſt until I had an opportunity of expreſſing my reſentment without intruding on their amuſement.

They expreſſed their approbation of my conduct, and I retired to waſh the blood from my face. A ſurgeon, who was in the Theatre, came to examine my wound, and declared it would be dangerous to reſume the character of Hamlet, as the exertion might endanger my eye, by producing an inflammation, which he was certain would ariſe. One of the blades had paſſed about the eighth of an inch below the ball of my eye, and the force

force of the blow had occaſioned a conſiderable tumefaction; I therefore retired to my lodgings, and, as you may ſuppoſe, with a mind but ill at eaſe.

When I became rather more tranquil, the firſt idea I conceived was to demand ſatisfaction of young Winterton; but, on reflection, I thought the baſeneſs of his conduct did not merit my adoption of ſuch a procedure. While revolving on what method I ſhould purſue, I received the following note, which immediately decided for me:—

"SIR,

" SIR,

" Though it may be degrading to place myſelf on an equality with an actor, I cannot ſilently paſs over the inſult I received from you this evening at the Theatre, and therefore I in this inſtance wave my ſuperiority, and expect you to-morrow morning, by break of day, on the plain on the eaſt ſide of the hill.—I ſhall be accompanied by a friend, with a ſword and piſtols."

I returned this reply:—

" Your

"Your conduct, this evening, does not deserve to be treated on the terms of honourable equality; but I disdain revenging even so base and cowardly an action but in a way conformable to the dignity of honour; for this reason I will meet you to-morrow morning.—I conceive it would be better to terminate our difference without the intervention of seconds. I shall be on the plain unattended."

As I had no friend to whom I could confide this incident, or rather, knowing only one person that would have attended me, I thought it right to inform my adversary of it.

Feeling

Feeling but little inclination to ſleep, I paſſed the night in arranging ſome papers, and writing two or three letters, which would be neceſſary in caſe of a fatal reſult.

I quitted my lodgings before it was yet light, and traverſed the ſtreets, deeply meditating on my adverſe fate. When I arrived at the appointed place, I on my knees offered my fervent prayers to the Almighty Diſpoſer of events, and entreated his forgiveneſs for the action I was going to commit.

After waiting about a quarter of an hour, my adverſary, followed by Mr. Boulton, appeared on the ground.—

On

On my approaching them, they inſolently aſked me—

"Where is your friend?"

"Here," I haughtily replied, clapping my hand to my ſword.

"How will you fix the diſtance without a fourth perſon?" ſaid Mr. Boulton.

"That may be done without even a third," I anſwered.

"No, no," exclaimed he, "I do not intend to let you murder my friend; for I have not the leaſt doubt but

but you would take every advantage of him, if I were not preſent."

I made no reply to him, but aſked Mr. Winterton if we had met to talk.

"Let us ſtand at eight paces," ſaid he; and we immediately took our poſitions. I requeſted Mr. Boulton to retire, but he refuſed.

As I had received the challenge, and was the perſon offended, he ought to have given me the firſt fire; but the moment he had taken his poſition, he diſcharged his piſtol, but, owing to his precipitancy, the ball miſſed me.

I would

I would not advantage myſelf of the right which the impropriety of his conduct gave me, to take his life, but aſked him if he choſe to make an apology; he replied in the negative, and I fired my piſtol in the air. He inſtantly fired at me again; the ball grazed my thigh, and went through the bottom of my coat. Mr. Boulton then called to us to ſtop, and advancing, aſked if we were ſatisfied.

"I am neither ſatisfied with your conduct, nor with that of your friend," was my reply, and inſiſted he ſhould reſume his place. He immediately unſheathed his ſword, and ſwore I ſhould not fire at his friend. I told

told him his behaviour was unjuſt and cowardly;—he would not liſten to me, but placing himſelf between us, ſwore if I fired, he would proſecute me as an aſſaſſin. I now felt the diſadvantage of not having a friend.

Enraged at ſuch unparalleled baſeneſs, I reſolved to periſh rather than yield; I threw away my piſtol, and drawing my ſword, went up to Mr. Boulton, and aſked him whether it was his intention I ſhould fight them both—if ſo, I was ready to do it; and though I conſidered them as poltroons, one muſt retire while I engaged the other.

Mr.

Mr. Winterton, who had not ſpoken during his friend's ſcandalous proceeding, ſeemed rouſed by my reflection on his courage, and inſiſted that Mr. Boulton ſhould put up his ſword, and retire from the ground. He then drew his, and furiouſly attacked me; I parried his thruſts, and for ſome time acted only on the defenſive, but receiving a wound on my elbow, which bled profuſely, and fearing my ſtrength would ſoon fail me, I attacked in turn, and diſarmed my adverſary.

While I was ſtooping to take up Mr. Winterton's ſword, Mr. Boulton again came forward, and aimed a violent blow at me, which, by a for-

tunate movement, I avoided. Wound up to an uncommon pitch of anger at ſuch unexampled atrocity, I ruſhed on him, and bidding him defend himſelf, I at the firſt thruſt paſſed my ſword through his right ſide, and he fell inſtantly at my feet. Mr. Winterton, on coming up to him, declared he was dead. My anger was now ſubdued, and I endeavoured to give him the neceſſary aſſiſtance.

While we were thus engaged, ſome labourers appeared in ſight; and beckoning to them to approach, we engaged them to convey Mr. Boulton into the town. The ſymptoms of life were very faint; yet, neglecting

my own ſafety, the idea of eſcaping by flight never occurred to me, and indeed, had I wiſhed it, I do not think I had ſufficient ſtrength.

When I entered my apartment, I found myſelf weak and faint; I ſent for the ſurgeon I had ſeen at the Theatre the preceding evening, and after he had dreſſed my wounds, I begged of him, if poſſible, to obtain ſome intelligence of Mr. Boulton's real ſituation, and acquaint me with it. In about half an hour he returned, and informed me that, on examining his wound, it had been declared mortal. I was not much alarmed at this account, but calmly waited the arrival

of the Officers of Juſtice. In about an hour they entered my chamber, and conveyed me to priſon, from whence I have written this.

Separated from the world, the wretched victim of unmerited misfortune, without a ray of hope to cheer and ſupport me, but that which conſcious integrity furniſhes—my mind is tranquil, and indifferent with reſpect to impending events.

If Boulton ſhould not recover from his wound, my death is certain; his uncle poſſeſſes conſiderable power in this town, and will proſecute me with the utmoſt rigour. I am alone, friendleſs,

friendleſs, and unknown, without any other ſupport than my innocence.—Mr. Winterton being the only perſon who knows the real circumſtances of the caſe, I have no witneſs to produce in my favour, and I ſhall, moſt probably, be condemned without being heard.

Promiſe me, my dear friend, that you will not think of this affair; conſider me as one whom you formerly loved, but who is now for ever loſt to you—to the world—and to himſelf; and let me, without a murmur, ſuffer the rigour of my fate.

Do not communicate to Matilda my unfortunate end—it may probably give her pain;—when time ſhall have effaced the melancholy impreſſion, relate my ſtory to her—perhaps ſhe may pity my ſufferings.

I feel no repugnance for the paſt, nor dread of the future, and poſſibly I am indebted for my preſent tranquillity and indifference, to her cruelty. —Farewel! May happineſs and health ever attend you!

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

January 18.

MY fate is yet uncertain;—Boulton ſtill lives, though his death is momentarily expected.—My ſituation renders me ill;—the certainty of death would be preferable to my preſent inquietude;—its horrors, even under

the moſt ignominious form, are leſs agonizing than what I now experience. Shut up alone in a gloomy dungeon, of about ſix feet in height, as many in length, and four feet wide, I have not room to walk; and if I had, the weight of iron with which my legs are fettered, would ſoon compel me to deſiſt.

Thus ſituated, my lonely hours paſs in ſighs and tears;—freely would I ſhorten them by terminating my exiſtence, but I hope for the opportunity of juſtifying my injured reputation. The idea of leaving a defamed name gives me pain, and no one but myſelf can clear it from the imputation with which

which it is disgraced; that done, with what transport shall I quit a world, in which I have only experienced sorrow and misfortunes!

Sincerely do I thank you for your generous offer to attend me at my trial —this is a proof of your friendship, for which I am truly grateful; but I should consider myself a most ungenerous and ungrateful man, to consent to an action, which would occasion you so much inconvenience and trouble to accomplish. It would also be torturing your feelings without contributing to my advantage, and for which reason I decidedly reject your

offer. I beg you will acquieſce in my refuſal—I ſhall conſider it as a favour —it is, perhaps, the laſt I ſhall ever have occaſion to aſk of you.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

JULIA TO SOPHIA.

January 20.

OH my Sophia! what a tale have I to unfold! How ſhall I acquire courage to communicate to you the dreadful narrative?—The myſtery is at length unravelled, and it has frozen me with horror.—My agitation prevents me from writing connectedly, and in fact

fortunate Horton. The exceſs of my anger gave me courage, and enabled me to reaſon with him on the cruelty of his conduct, and the innocence of mine.—He began his attack by obſerving that he was much hurt to find that one of his daughters ſhould have relinquiſhed the duties and principles he had always endeavoured to impreſs on their minds, and fix her attachment on an unworthy object, one who was far beneath the rank ſhe held in the world.

He pronounced theſe words with a repulſive dignity, that impoſed my ſilence for a few minutes; but reflecting that it might be conſidered

as

as an indication of guilt, I determined to reply, and aſked if he were ſpeaking to me.

"Yes, Julia; and I am doubly afflicted to ſee you ſo perverſe."

"My revered father, I really do not underſtand what you mean. Be kind enough to explain it to me."

"Julia, do not play the hypocrite with your father."

"I deſpiſe the character, Sir, and am ſorry to find my father knows ſo little of his daughter, as to ſuppoſe her capable

capable of employing it on any occaſion."

"This is great effrontery!—You are very bold, Miſs—I did not expect this from you; and ſince an opportunity now offers, I will frankly tell you that your plans are diſcovered."

"What plans, Sir?"

"Your clandeſtine intercourſe with Mr. Horton, and your intention of giving yourſelf to the arms of a vagabond."

"I muſt confeſs, Sir, I did not expect ſo ſerious a charge, and that you

you would have blamed me on reports totally falſe, and deſtitute of the leaſt foundation;—you are, Sir, miſinformed, and very much miſtaken. However badly you may think of your daughter, the gentleman whom you have been pleaſed to involve in the accuſation, poſſeſſes too much honour to attempt to acquire any woman's affection clandeſtinely. In fact, Sir, his merit places him above employing art—he is a man, whoſe regard and eſteem would reflect honour on the higheſt dignities."

"What, dare you avow ſuch ſentiments before me?"

"I

"I think it right, Sir, to defend a man who unfortunately has not at preſent the power of juſtifying himſelf. I glory, Sir, in avowing even to you, that I feel the ſincereſt friendſhip for Mr. Horton; and, if I were permitted, I could clearly prove to you, that it would be the height of folly for me to entertain any other ſentiments for him after the confidence he has repoſed in me.—Be aſſured, my dear father, you have a wrong opinion of Mr. Horton's character."

"But, Julia, is it not currently reported in the town that you intended to elope with him?"

"Sir,

"Sir, the reports in the town give me but little uneaſineſs, while I know them to be founded on falſehood and injuſtice. I feel convinced that I have never done any thing to merit reproach; and while I have that felicity, I entreat my father not to condemn me on ſlight grounds."

"I do not, Julia; for, ſince your connection with this young man, you have treated Mr. Boulton with the utmoſt coolneſs, and evident averſion. His preſent misfortune originates from your behaviour, and, ſhould he die, you muſt certainly be conſidered as the cauſe."

"My

"I am ſorry, Sir, that the cauſe of humanity is, in the preſent inſtance, in oppoſition to what I owe myſelf; but I ſhould conſider myſelf highly culpable to encourage hopes I can never realize.—I muſt again aſſure you, my dear father, that I can never conſent to marry Mr. Boulton;—death is preferable to ſuch an union."

"Perverſe, obſtinate girl! I ſee the cauſe of this conduct: you ſtill ſigh for that blackguard actor; but it is my duty to prevent the diſgrace ſuch a connection would reflect on my family. Therefore prepare to receive Mr. Boulton as your deſtined huſband, as ſoon as he is recovered.—

I will

I will not hear any more.—You would plunge into infamy and ruin, and I muſt prevent it."

The firm tone in which he pronounced the laſt ſentence, overpowered my feelings, and I burſt into an agony of tears.

"Theſe artificial tears, Miſs, have loſt their effect on me. While you was dutiful, you was dear to me.—Gratify this firſt wiſh of my heart, or renounce your mother's and my affection and protection for ever."

I felt ſuch an oppreſſion at my heart as to deprive me of utterance. My father,

father, at the concluſion of his ſpeech, aroſe to quit the room; but perceiving my ſituation, a moment of returning tenderneſs prevented him from executing his reſolution; he ſtopped, and preſſing me to his boſom, exclaimed—

"Oh Julia, what miſery this unfortunate paſſion creates!—But I have myſelf to blame for having introduced a man into my houſe, from whom I could not expect any thing elſe."

"Oh Sir, can you ſtill load with reproaches a man who is ſo little deſerving of them?—You are deceived by ſome fatal miſtake."

"No,

"No, Julia, your anxiouſneſs to excuſe him, is proof too ſtrong of the intereſt he has inſpired you with;—but you muſt forget him—yes, you muſt, or never conſider yourſelf as my daughter."

He delivered this ſpeech with the coolneſs of a determined reſolution, and inſtantly left me. I wiſhed to be alone, when perhaps a ſhower of tears would have relieved my ſwoln heart; but two of my ſiſters immediately came to me, and by the moſt cruel remarks on my ſituation, increaſed the anguiſh I experienced. I excuſed myſelf from appearing at dinner, and

before ſeven o'clock I was obliged to go to bed.

I have been ill ever ſince; and if I am to be thus perſecuted, I wiſh I may never recover.—Oh Sophia! I know not what to think, or how to act.—Poor Horton! how miſerably ſituated has he been ſince the fatal duel!—I underſtand he is confined in a damp and dark dungeon, and treated like the vileſt criminal.—I much fear he has not the means of procuring any indulgences from his obdurate jailer.—Would to God I could follow the dictates of my heart! but, in my preſent ſituation, I muſt

I muſt act with caution.—Your friendſhip only can conſole the unhappy Julia.

LETTER XXVI.

HORTON TO JERNINGHAM.

January 21.

AH my friend! ceaſe, ceaſe your conſolations, for, believe me, your offering of them is uſeleſs;—my heart is the ſeat of deſolation and deſpair, and the blandiſhments of friendſhip are no longer ſoothing to my ſorrows. I have attained to ſuch a climax of miſery,

miſery, that I could almoſt wiſh to be deprived of your friendſhip; then I ſhould have no other misfortune to dread in this life.

Why do you endeavour to conſole me for Matilda's coolneſs and negligence?—You know but little of my ſentiments, my dear friend, if you think that any thing on earth can compenſate me for the loſs of Matilda's affection. Unfortunately, ſuch is the organization of my heart, that it is only ſuſceptible of the moſt violent paſſions, and a fatal infidelity deprives it of all its hopes. I only enjoyed the delights of favoured love for a few hours, but to feel more acutely

the horrors of its loſs.—What a ſource of ſorrow is this cruel remembrance! Every other misfortune of my life appears trivial, compared with the loſs of Matilda's love!—Encouraged by her tender ſolicitude, I could have ſmiled at the terrors which encircle me—with what firmneſs could I have ſupported the moſt violent attacks of misfortune!—But I muſt abandon this train of thinking; it ſerves but to increaſe my woe by verifying the certainty of my loſs.

The ſtate of Mr. Boulton's wound ſtill keeps me in ſuſpenſe: one day he is better, and then again he is worſe. I have ſo often been a prey to hope

hope and fear, that I am not now ſuſceptible of either.

In your laſt letter, you ſay you have ſeen Matilda in company with a Nobleman, who you are informed is lately arrived from Ireland. I remember to have heard mention of a Peer of that kingdom, who was formerly a friend of her father's, and on whom ſhe beſtowed the moſt animated praiſe. I alſo recollect a circumſtance which overwhelms me with dread—ſhe formerly correſponded with this man of quality!—Great God! ſhould my conjecture be true; but, no, the thought is injurious;—yet ſurely his attentions are the cauſe of her indifference.—Can

ſhe be ſo vain as to ſacrifice the tender vows of conſtancy and honour to the frivolous proteſtations of a Nobleman?—Matilda ſurely is not capable of ſuch vile and culpable conduct.—Oh my friend! I know not what to conclude. Your laſt letter has excited a variety of painful emotions.—Adieu, adieu!—I muſt endeavour to procure a remiſſion of my ſorrows from ſleep.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

January 27.

CONTRARY to the predictions of the ſurgeons, Mr. Boulton's wound will not probably terminate fatally; they do not, however, conſider him as totally out of danger, and I am ſtill confined to my wretched cell.—It is impoſſible to deſcribe to you what I

have ſuffered in this dreary abode; the time I have been in it, though ſhort, is ſurely more than ſufficient to expiate the moſt atrocious crimes.—To what trials am I condemned!—With what ſeverity am I deſtined to feel the pangs of misfortune!—And how often, in this intereſted and ungenerous age, is not misfortune conſidered as the juſt puniſhment of criminality?—I fear my reputation has fallen a ſacrifice to malignity and prejudice: I am conſidered as a villain, becauſe I am borne down by miſery and misfortune. Is not ſuch a dreadful ſituation inſupportable?—Did I not fear that my motives would be miſinterpreted, I would freely liberate myſelf

myſelf from the misfortunes which enchain every faculty of my ſoul. I am almoſt perſuaded that, in a ſituation like mine, ſuch an action would be laudable. It is, perhaps, my duty to do it. The days of life which Heaven has granted me in this world, are probably near their cloſe, and I am deſtined to terminate them by my own hands. If the thought be impious, I hope He, who knows its ſource, will pardon it.

Suicide has, for ſome time, been the ſubject of my reflections; but I conſider the man who coolly comes forward as its apologiſt, the enemy of ſociety. It is only in ſimilar ſituations

to mine where it can obtain the ſmalleſt appearance of right; and I feel angry when I hear any one coolly and metaphyſically diſcuſs a ſubject to which he is a total ſtranger, and on which only the victims of misfortune can reaſon. Yet how often do we hear ſuicide blamed while the moſt enlightened are not *certain* of its illegality;—ſurely no one can condemn it, without incurring the imputation of preſumption.—If my feelings are ſuch, and certainly they are, that I cannot ſupport the load of misfortune which oppreſſes me, I muſt look upon the termination of my exiſtence as the ſupremeſt happineſs. If the cauſe which produces ſuicide was not natural,

ſhould we not revolt at the idéa? If the principle was not in ſome way innate, ſhould we not reject it with horror?—On the contrary, we look with tranſport on the moment that is to terminate our ſorrows, and view the future with confidence and joy.—I am conſcious that it would be dangerous ſuch ſentiments ſhould be generally adopted:—Senſibility would each moment ſeize the dagger, and no trace of virtue would be left on earth. But I muſt always think, and I judge from proofs, that there are circumſtances to which death is preferable, and which circumſtances indicate that we ſhould ſhake off the cumbrous load

of

of life. If ſo, ſurely my ſituation would juſtify the deed.

I write to you, my friend, with the philoſophic tranquillity of a being detached from exiſtence; in this contemplation, I think myſelf ſuperior to the ills of life, and enjoy in advance the tranſports of the ſoul, when it ſhall be emancipated from its chains.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

January 29.

TO-MORROW, I am informed, I ſhall be liberated from my priſon, and enter again into the wretched boſom of ſociety. The future does not promiſe me the leaſt ſatisfaction, and every thing, without exception, appears to me under the gloomy aſpect of

of a priſon, and the ferocity of a jailer.

Mr. Mackworth, to whom I muſt be eternally indebted for his attentions to me during my confinement, has told me, that in conſequence of the diſadvantageous reports which are circulated with regard to me, he fears it would be dangerous and imprudent to continue my profeſſion here. I muſt neceſſarily ſubmit to his apparently juſt reaſoning. Thus am I again thrown on the world, without knowing where to go, or what to do! I am, however, determined to brave the tempeſt a little longer, to ſee to what depth of miſery my wretched deſtiny

deſtiny will plunge me. I muſt not, however, ſay I am friendleſs; yet, ſingular as it may appear, I am more afflicted at the ſolicitudes of friendſhip, than at the combined efforts of hatred and prejudice.

Yeſterday morning I was viſited by an old woman, who entered my cell with an air of myſtery that excited my curioſity and ſurpriſe; after cloſing the door, ſhe advanced ſlowly towards me, and put down a ſmall piece of paper. I obſerved tears trickle down her cheeks, and that the trembling of her hands was attributable to ſome other cauſe than the weakneſs of age. I took up the paper, to which there was

was no addreſs, and holding it in my hand, was doubtful whether I ſhould open it, when the woman ſaid—

" It is for you, Sir."

I then opened it, and found it contained a fifty pound Bank note, with theſe words :—

" The tribute of friendſhip to ſuffering merit.—Uſe it as your own property, and conſtitute the happineſs of your friend."

Though

Though I had never ſeen Julia's writing, I was firmly perſuaded this noble act was her's. When I enquired of the woman, ſhe evaded the queſtion by ſaying—

"I come from an angel, whoſe only delight is doing good.—I have particular orders not to mention the name."

"I do not wiſh," I replied, "to obtain your ſecret; but I hope you will not refuſe to carry back my thanks to the perſon.'

She conſented, and I wrote this note:—

"Although

" Although I well know the author of an action ſo honourable to humanity, I hope I ſhall be pardoned refuſing a benefaction which, though it muſt appear to every unprejudiced perſon as highly noble, others may probably think it imprudent and derogatory."

I encloſed the Bank note in this billet, and gave it to the woman.—After imploring a thouſand bleſſings on me, ſhe retired, and left me a prey to the moſt corroding reflections.

I was

I was convinced it was only Julia who could be guilty of ſuch imprudent generoſity, and this idea increaſed my pain.

" Good God !" I exclaimed, " is every circumſtance of my life to occaſion ſorrow ?—This amiable girl, diſdaining the bounds of prudence, ſuffers herſelf to be ſwayed only by ſentiments the moſt generous and noble, but which, if known to a misjudging world, would be condemned. Surely her parents have reaſon to curſe me as the cauſe of unhappineſs to one, who is an honour to her family, and an ornament to ſociety."

I flung

I flung myſelf on the bed with the hope of calming the tumult of my mind by ſleep, when the turning of the key in my door rouſed me. It was the old woman, who exclaimed—

"Oh dear! Oh dear, Sir, how could you do ſo?—If I had known what was in the letter, I would never have taken it. You can't imagine how unhappy you've made my poor dear Miſs Julia; ſhe cried as if her heart would break when ſhe read your letter. But, Sir, here's another, and you muſtn't do ſo again indeed."

I took

I took the letter, and read as follows :—

" If an action like mine be honourable to humanity, you are certainly wrong in oppoſing it ;—for the intereſt you feel for my reputation, you are entitled to my thanks ; and with reſpect to the virtue of prudence, I know how to eſtimate its juſt value. The ſentiments of prudence ſhould never be in contradiction with thoſe of the heart. I ſhould, perhaps, be aſhamed of having offered ſuch a trifle to a man of your merit ; but being an offer of friendſhip, it may have

have its value. I ſincerely hope that the cloud which now envelopes you, will ſoon be diſſipated, and that your character will appear to the world with the brilliant colour it really poſſeſſes.—Heaven grant the period may not be diſtant!—it is the principal object of my wiſhes.

"JULIA."

Alternately I was afflicted, rejoiced, and agitated by this letter; and though the tumult of my ſenſations were painfully contrarious, I was determined to refuſe any pecuniary aſſiſtance, and oppoſe ſuch romantic generoſity, conceiving

conceiving that ſome diſagreeable effect might reſult from it. I therefore told the old woman that I had ſuſpected who the firſt letter came from, and that I required not this proof to be convinced of its author's benevolence; but I was ſorry to find that ſhe could ſo far degrade herſelf as to intereſt herſelf in behalf of a criminal, and whoſe character was at leaſt doubtful.

"Oh, Sir, I was her nurſe," ſaid the poor woman; "ſhe is an angel; and whenever ſhe's reſolved to do a good action, it isn't in the power of what people ſay to hinder her.—Yes, Sir, ſhe has been a friend to me

and all my family, and conſtantly employs me in meſſages of charity; and if you refuſe what ſhe now begs you to take, Sir, I can never ſee her—ſhe'll be ſo much afflicted."

"Nurſe," I replied, "I am not inſenſible of Miſs Julia's kindneſs; but I cannot be the object of her bounty. I have no neceſſity for money; for which reaſon, accepting ſuch a ſum would be robbing the poor and unfortunate."

"God bleſs you for that thought!" cried the poor nurſe; "but thoſe who have always been poor, can better ſupport

port their wants than one who has been uſed to live at eaſe.".

" Very true, nurſe, that is very poſſible; but I have learned to ſuffer without complaining."

Inſenſibly I took up the pen, and mechanically wrote as follows :—

" The intereſt you feel for an unfortunate man, whoſe only recommendation to you is his misfortunes, excites in my boſom the moſt ardent eſteem. Though I hoped you would ſilently commiſerate my adverſe fate, I

did not think you would ſo openly manifeſt any concern for one who is a ſtranger, and an object of indifference to every one elſe. The honour is ſolely thine; but ſhame and remorſe would be my lot if I ſuffered you to purſue a plan, of which it is my duty to point out the dangers.

" I conſider your friendſhip as the greateſt bleſſing of my life; it merits all my gratitude and veneration.—I would wiſh to preſerve it, but at an expence leſs dear to you.—You will readily find means to employ the ſum you offer me, more conformably to your generoſity. I have nō neceſſity for it;—my deſires are limited, and conſequently

conſequently eaſily gratified. The preſervation of life cannot be of any importance to one who views death as the only path to tranquillity.—When, at a future period, we ſhall both be inſenſible to the mean reflections of a corrupt world, then ſhall we enjoy the ſoft blandiſhments of reciprocal friendſhip; but, at preſent, we muſt not be regardleſs of the cuſtoms of ſociety, of which you are a diſtinguiſhed member."

In this letter I encloſed the Bank note, and gave it to the nurſe, who would not have taken it, had I not

declared I would ſend it by ſome other meſſenger; ſhe then conſented, and departed, deploring what ſhe termed my obſtinacy.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

January 31.

YESTERDAY, at about five o'clock in the evening, I quitted my priſon, and was again introduced into ſociety. There is a charm in the idea of liberty which communicates to the moſt afflicted mind a ray of brilliancy.—Mr. Mackworth obligingly accompa-

nied me, and inſiſted on my ſupping at his houſe. On my arrival there, his wife was ſo much affected for my ſufferings, that ſhe wept profuſely. The alteration of my countenance ſtrongly indicated what I had undergone: I am thin and ſqualid, and look like melancholy and deſpair perſonified.—I remained at Mr. Mackworth's till very late, and then retired to a lodging, which he had been kind enough to procure for me.

This morning I roſe early, with a view to take a walk round the town; but judge of my feelings when I found myſelf pointed at as a monſter. As I paſſed the ſtreets, I was repeatedly aſſailed

aſſailed with, "There goes the actor who ſtabbed Mr. Boulton."—I find my character has been painted in the blackeſt colours; Mr. Boulton's friends are many and powerful, and they, no doubt, have endeavoured to ſpread the moſt injurious reports of me;—I know not what I ought to do, but ſome ſteps muſt be taken to juſtify my reputation. I have thought of appealing to the public by publiſhing my caſe, but I have not determined.

Mr. Mackworth has, with much delicacy, told me he cannot pay me that attention in public his inclination prompts him to do; that, being a public man, he is under the neceſſity

of acting with caution, as Mr. Boulton's friends are the richeſt and moſt conſiderable people in this town. His reaſoning is certainly juſt, and I may conſider myſelf as an outcaſt from ſociety: like the firſt murderer, I am marked, and, like him, I ſeem condemned to wander. But it ſhall not be ſo—I am determined it ſhall not be ſo!

LETTER

LETTER XXX.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

February 8.

THE ear of Prejudice is deaf to the voice of Truth.—I have publiſhed a ſtatement of my tranſaction with Mr. Boulton; it has found but few readers and fewer partiſans—the greater number treat it with contempt. I ſee it is impoſſible to check the torrent,

and I muſt quietly ſubmit to be its victim.

Why, my friend, do you adviſe me to return to London?—I cannot;—excepting you, I have not a ſingle friend there, and the recollection of what is paſt would be continual torment to me.—Could I live there without ſeeing Matilda?—Could I ſupport her indifference, perhaps her contempt?—No, no, it would be folly. I will go to Ireland: Mr. Mackworth ſtrongly adviſes it; he ſays he is certain I ſhall be ſucceſsful in my profeſſion there, and that the hoſpitality of the Iriſh will efface the remembrance of the mortifications I have

have experienced here. As every place is indifferent to me, I am preparing to depart in a few days.

As I dare not go out without being pointed at, I am generally alone, and melancholy and wearifome are my days. Julia's nurſe calls now and then to ſee me, and inſiſts on procuring every thing I require. Her attentions diſpleaſe, becauſe I know they are not the effect of her own kindneſs. Her conſtant theme is Julia's excellence, and I liſten to her with pleaſure, knowing her praiſes are juſt. Surely this amiable girl is more than human; the numberleſs benevolent actions which her nurſe relates of her, would

fill a volume.—Poor Julia! I fear ſhe will not be happy, though ſhe contributes to render many others ſo. I underſtand her family are angry with her: they torment her to marry Mr. Boulton, which ſhe abſolutely refuſes. Would it not be an outrage to virtue, that ſhe ſhould be compelled to unite herſelf to ſuch a vile ſcoundrel?

Be not uneaſy with regard to my health; I aſſure you my wounds are all healed, except thoſe of my heart, which will continue bleeding while there is any blood in my veins. I have a ſcar on my cheek, but not a very large one.

LETTER

LETTER XXXI.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

February 14.

I KNOW not why I linger here, nor am I anxious to depart; in fact every thing is become an object of indifference to me, and I continue in exiſtence merely becauſe I cannot bring myſelf to fix a period to its termination.—Here, in a large, rich, and populous town,

town, I am as lonely as a ſavage in the midſt of a deſert; and except to the old nurſe, whoſe kindneſs daily increaſes, I ſeldom utter a ſyllable.

Notwithſtanding my remonſtrances, ſhe will not deſiſt from attending to me; and on telling her the other day ſhe took too much care of a man who had not the power of rewarding her, ſhe burſt into tears, and ſaid—

"Ah! Sir, I am overpaid for any ſervice I can render you."

I entreated her to explain, but ſhe evaded it. This woman, though unpoliſhed, has a ſuſceptible heart, and

ſeems

ſeems to entertain opinions ſeldom found among perſons of her rank.

Since I firſt became acquainted with her, ſhe has had the care of my linen; and yeſterday, in packing up ready for my departure, I found many things which I thought did not belong to me, and, among the reſt, a white ſilk waiſtcoat beautifully embroidered. I aſked the nurſe how it came among my things? She affected to be ſurpriſed; but when I expreſſed my ſuſpicion to whom I was indebted for it, ſhe confeſſed to have received it from Julia with the reſt of the things, with orders to place them among my clothes

in

in ſuch a way as to eſcape immediate notice.

"She conſiders them," ſaid the nurſe, "as a ſmall token of her friendſhip; and, if you refuſe accepting them, I am ſure ſhe'll be very much vexed."

"Thou, Oh God!" I exclaimed, "haſt alone the power of rewarding ſuch perſevering beneficence;—and if by accepting thoſe things, which I highly value, can procure her one moment of ſatisfaction, I will gladly receive them, and this waiſtcoat I will preſerve, unſullied, to the laſt hour of my life."

The

The packet-boat will ſail in a day or two for Dublin, when I ſhall quit this place. Mr. Mackworth has obligingly offered me letters of recommendation to ſome perſons of conſequence in that city. I aſſured him of my gratitude for his kindneſs, but declined accepting them. Death only can terminate my woes, and it is the only wiſh I have;—I feel none of the youthful ardency and ambition to aſpire to perfection; even the proſpect of a diadem would not rouſe me from my apathy.

Matilda then has at length condeſcended to enquire after me! I fear, from the ſtyle in which you mention it,

it, ſhe did not expreſs much concern for my ſituation; if ſo, ſhe has certainly ſome motives for her conduct which I know nothing of. I have not deſerved ſuch treatment; but I am convinced, by fatal experience, that in this world merit does not enſure its reward. It ſeems, in fact, that vice is proſperous, while virtue is ſubjected to every ſpecies of perſecution. I can readily ſuppoſe that ſuch will not always be the caſe: it is ſaid that virtue carries its recompence with it; I deny the truth of the aſſertion. I am not vicious, yet I have never experienced the reward of virtue.

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

February 18.

I HAVE ſeen Julia, and taken leave of her for ever. Yeſterday evening the friendly nurſe called, and aſked me to accompany her home, as there was a perſon there who wiſhed to ſee me. I ſuffered her to lead me, and on entering her little apartment, I perceived

perceived the lovely Julia. I cannot deſcribe the emotion I experienced at ſeeing her. She aroſe on my entrance, but neither of us could utter a ſyllable: I approached, and taking her hand, endeavoured to ſpeak, but a thouſand different ſenſations deprived me of utterance;—I felt the tears ſtart into my eyes—I did not attempt to ſuppreſs them, and I found relief. After a long ſilence, ſhe falteringly ſaid—

"Alas! Mr. Horton, your ſufferings have been ſevere ſince laſt we met."

"Yes,

"Yes, Madam, I have ſuſtained the acuteſt ſorrows; and what heightened them, was to find they affected you ſo ſenſibly."

"Surely, Sir, I muſt have been callous to every generous emotion, had they not intereſted me; but I hope they will ſoon be at an end.—You are now going to quit a town which has proved itſelf unworthy of you; I doubt not but you will meet the diſtinction you merit in another place, and I aſſure you there is one perſon even here who knows your talents, your virtues, and who—who—reſpects them."

She

She ſtammered in pronouncing theſe words, and her downcaſt eyes were filled with tears. Tranſported with gratitude, I flung myſelf at her feet, exclaiming—

"Oh Julia! why are you ſo laviſh of your kindneſs on an unhappy being, who is condemned to miſery and eternal wretchedneſs?—Withdraw your friendſhip from a man who muſt inevitably diſgrace you."

Here a remembrance of all my misfortunes ruſhed upon my mind, and nearly deprived me of my ſenſes.—The nurſe, who was alſo much agitated, took me by the hand, and led me

me to my ſeat. In a few minutes I became more tranquil, and attempted to expreſs my gratitude to the lovely Julia for the attentions I had received during my confinement, and the kindneſs I had experienced ſince my liberation; but ſhe checked me by ſaying—

"You ſeem reſolved to oppoſe every ſervice it might be in my power to render you; and ſuch being your determination, accept my wiſhes for your happineſs—they will ever attend you; and it will contribute to my ſatisfaction to hear of your ſucceſs and felicity."

I promiſed, if ever I was again happy, ſhe ſhould certainly be informed of it; but at preſent the period ſeemed far, very far diſtant; and that, in future, I was reſolved to confine my ſorrows to my own boſom.

"Ungenerous man!—cruel inflexibility!—Even in affliction, there is a ſatisfaction in communicating with a friend, and it is my ambition to be conſidered Mr. Horton's friend;—but I find it is preſumptuous to expect it, and I am juſtly puniſhed."

"Oh Julia! you wrong me greatly. I am ſenſible, extremely ſenſible of the honour you confer on me; but there

there are many, many objections to it;—think of your ſituation, of mine; of what you owe your friends, your family, and yourſelf: you will then think me right in refuſing the higheſt honour I could deſire.—I wiſh to preſerve a conſcious probity."

"You have convinced me, Sir, and I thank you for your generoſity. I am certain you are right, and I ſubmit to the deciſion of your ſuperior judgment.—I now, perhaps, ſee you for the laſt time; and, though we ſhould never meet again, we ſhall not be the leſs friends; for, if I am not deceived, the impreſſions of friendſhip are not eaſily effaced."

She then looked at her watch, and with great emotion ſaid—

"It is late, I muſt go.—Farewel, Mr. Horton!—and, ſince we may never ſee each other again, permit me to aſſure you, for the laſt time, I ſhall never while I live, ceaſe to pray for your happineſs and proſperity."

The tears ſtole down her cheeks, and the ſoft plaintiveneſs of her voice thrilled to my very ſoul. I approached her with reſpect, and taking her hand, preſſed it to my lips, ſaying—

"May you be as happy as you deſerve!"

"Alas!"

"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, ſighing, "that will never be;—but I muſt fly.—Farewel! farewel for ever!"

The look which accompanied theſe words ſuſpended every action of my ſenſes: I could not reply; my eyes were fixed on the door for ſome minutes, and when I recovered, I was ſurpriſed to find myſelf alone. My feelings were then beyond deſcription agonizing. The nurſe, having attended Julia to her father's, gave me time to recover myſelf; and when ſhe returned, I was tolerably compoſed. I remained with her a little time, and then haſtened to my lodgings, where reflecting on the paſt events of my life,

life, Matilda's cruelty, and the charming Julia's ſuperior excellence, baniſhed ſleep from my wearied eyelids.

In about an hour I ſhall embark for Ireland. For theſe two or three days the weather has been tempeſtuous; but the wind being now rather more favourable, the Captain is reſolved to ſail. I could almoſt wiſh, if I were to be the only victim, to be engulphed in the waves; then, in the boſom of the ſea, ſhould I be at eaſe from all my ſorrows.

Will you believe that, though I have every reaſon to be pleaſed at quitting this town, I feel, as my departure approaches,

proaches, a melancholy impreſſion for which I cannot account.—Perhaps it is the increaſed diſtance I ſhall be from you, and that our correſpondence will be leſs frequent and more uncertain.

You may inform Matilda of my departure; the intereſt, you ſay, ſhe ſeemed to feel at the recital of my misfortunes, gives me hopes of ſtill poſſeſſing her affection.—Ireland may, perhaps, be more favourable to me than formerly, and my wiſhes may be yet fulfilled.—Vain hope! I feel its inutility;—deſolation and deſpair fill my heart, and deſtroy every flattering proſpect I may form.

Adieu,

Adieu, my friend! it is late, and I am told I muſt be on board in a quarter of an hour; if I am not more fortunate in this voyage than I have been the reſt of my life, our bark will not long reſiſt the violence of the wind and the fury of the waves.

END OF VOL. I.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

FEB 13 1940